In Pursuit of Allah's Pleasure

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Preface

All praise is due to Allah (SWT). We praise Him and seek His assistance. We ask for His forgiveness and take refuge in Him from the evil within ourselves and from the evil of our deeds. He whom Allah (SWT) guides will never be diverted yet whomever He sends astray will never find his way. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah (SWT) alone, He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (ﷺ) is His servant and messenger.

On the authority of Abu Dardaa' (ra), the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

"*Verily, the scholars are the heirs of the Prophets.****"*** [1]

The righteous scholars are the heirs of the Prophets; Imams of the people after the Prophets; they guide and direct the people to Allah (SWT) and teach them His Deen; and they have noble manners and praiseworthy attributes. They are the scholars of the truth; scholars of guidance and successors to the Prophets; they fear Allah (SWT) much and are constantly checking their actions, and pay great importance to what He orders and forbids. They follow in the footsteps of the Prophets: in their teaching and instructing, their character and actions, their words and conduct and, as a result, they suffer in the same way that the Prophets did. The righteous scholars suffer persecution and oppression, mockery and ridicule, torture and imprisonment and murder in the same way that the Prophets did. They speak and uphold the truth wherever they go in order that the religion of Allah (SWT) may ***"be superior over all other religions even though the disbelievers may detest it,"*** [2] and they pay for it dearly.

On the authority of Anas bin Malik, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "*Among the signs of the Hour will be the disappearance of knowledge and the appearance of ignorance."* [3]

Ibn Hajar Al-Asqalanee said, commenting on this Hadeeth: *"Indeed it will not disappear except with the deaths of the Ulama."* [4] In this day and age, how few are the scholars that are suffering for no other reason except that they are speaking the truth. Some of them have been assassinated and some of them have been imprisoned, whilst others still remain under house arrest.

This book, *"In Pursuit of Allah's Pleasure" is* the translation of a book titled: *"Al-Meethaaq Al-Aml Al-Islami"* (The Charter for Islamic Work) written by three scholars: Dr. Naajeh Ibrahim, Asim Abdul-Majid and Esaam-ud-Deen Darbaalah and released from behind the bars of Liman Turrah Prison, Egypt, in February 1984. The checking of this book was carried out by Dr. Sheikh Umar AbdurRahman, currently serving a life sentence in the USA, for no other reason than upholding the truth.

In this book the authors outlined a complete methodology for Islamic work today. From `Aqeedah to Da'wah, Jihad to Khilafah and Taqwa to Sabr (patience), they explained how all of these parts of Islam come together for the sole objective of each and every Muslim: to seek the Pleasure of Allah (SWT), the Irresistible. It was written in a manner portraying the true situation of the Muslims today and, coming from imprisoned scholars: a realistic portrayal.

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[1] Classified as Sahih by Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Ibn Maajah.
[2] Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 33.
[3] Sahih Bukhari and Sahih Muslim.
[4] Fath-ul-Baaree. Vol. 1, Page 239, Hadith No. 80.

This book is an excellent read by itself and an even better guide if used as a syllabus in learning Islam in an organised, collective manner. It is ideal as a basis for study circles and acts as a comprehensive manual. Coupled with the supplementary reading of some other books in the English language and memorisation of the Holy Quran, it can consolidate the knowledge of anyone seeking to work for Islam in this day and age.

We ask Allah (SWT) to accept the efforts of these scholars and protect them. To make this book a means of reviving the glory of His religion. To make our actions sincerely for His Sake and to include them on our Scale of good deeds on the Day of Judgement.

Ameen.

Introduction

In the Name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

All praise is due to Allah (SWT). We praise Him and seek His assistance. We ask for His forgiveness and take refuge in Him from the evil within ourselves and from the evil of our deeds. He whom Allah (SWT) guides will never be diverted yet whomever He sends astray will never find his way. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah (SWT) alone, He has no partner, and I bear witness that Muhammad (ﷺ) is His servant and messenger.

"O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except as Muslims." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 102.]

"O Mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you front a single person (Adam), and from him (Adam) He created his wife (Eve), and from them both He created many men and women. And fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (Kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 1.]

"O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and always speak the truth. He will direct you to do righteous deeds arid will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His Messenger, has indeed achieved a great achievement." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 70-71.]

To proceed:

Allah (SWT) says:

"Allah has promised those among you who believe, and do righteous good deeds, that He will certainly grant them succession (to the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear, provided they (believers) worship Him and do not associate anything (in worship) with Him." [Surah An-Nur (24), Ayah 55.]

This is a promise from Allah (SWT) to grant us victory, success, domination and glory. This promise appears to us like a luminous glimpse of hope, enlightening our way in this gloomy darkness encompassing our *Ummah.* This *Ummah,* which dominated the world for a long period of time, through which the *Khilafah* extended remarkably to protect most of the countries and govern them by Allah's (SWT) Book.

Unfortunately today, this same *Ummah is* swallowing the bitterness of humiliation and degradation. Its glory and pride have become like an old song chanted by children. Its *Khilafah* has fragmented into several petty states. Some have been seized by the Christians, some by the Jews, some controlled by atheists and idol worshippers, and the rest, so called '*Islamic States',* have been seized by secular rulers.

The enemies have flocked towards us. Enemies of all kinds. Schools and creeds, theories and philosophies, organisations and institutions, states and countries. They have all gathered to fight Islam and the Muslims. Some of them are incited by a hidden hatred and some by an old animosity.

The Twentieth Century has witnessed one of the fiercest blows inflicted upon our *Ummah* by our enemy: the collapse of the *Khilafah*. If only their conspiracy had stopped at the demise of *Khilafah*. But they went on to indoctrinate Muslims with strange, foreign ideas and concepts, in order to confuse our understanding of our *Deen.* Once we wake up and try to return to our original *Deen,* we will be confronted with an intellectual perplexity, in which evil and good is mixed. Hence, the truth will be ambiguous and we will go astray, and lose the true understanding of Islam.

This is our situation, or you can say, this is our ordeal engendered from our ignorance and negligence before the conspiracy of our enemy could inflict it upon us. However the promise of Allah (SWT) to those who believe and do righteous good deeds remains:

"...that He will certainly grant them succession (to the present rulers) in the earth, as He granted it to those before them, and that He will grant them the authority to practice their religion, that which He has chosen for them (Islam). And He will surely give them in exchange a safe security after their fear..." [Surah An-Nur (24), Ayah 55.]

In fact, Allah, had granted the first generation of this *Ummah,* the generation of the *Sahabah,* succession in the earth and domination when they succeeded to follow and submit their souls to the teaching of Islam, and adopted it, alone, as a basis for their unit and solidarity. Then they proceeded to practice it and implement it in their lives through a collective organised movement. This is the path to their domination and succession.

And it is the path to our success if we wake up one day and want to return to our Islam; if one day we accept to challenge our enemies and restore our Islam.

We have to hasten and rectify the abyss that has extended between us and our ancestors. We have to comply with their understanding of Islam and their actions, efforts and *Jihad* for the sake of Islam.

We are in great need to follow the footsteps of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his Companions and those who followed them with righteousness.

Al-Awza'ee was right when he said:

"Be patient and follow the Sunnah. Stick to what the Salaf said, say what they said, do not get involved in what they refrained from and follow the way of the righteous ancestors then you will obtain what they achieved."

The first path to follow is to learn not to decide before Allah (SWT) and His Messenger (ﷺ), not to raise our voices above the voice of the Prophet (ﷺ), to rid ourselves of any loyalty and to devote ourselves exclusively to Allah (SWT) and His religion.

Then, it will be easier for us to start and mould our characters according to a true and sincere Islamic code as a preliminary step towards the revival of this *Deen.*

"Verily, Allah will help those who help His (cause)." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 40.]

Therefore, we introduce this book ***"In Pursuit of Allah's Pleasure"***, as a clear message and a reminder of the principles and fundamentals of *Shari'ah* which should not be absent from any Islamic movement drawn into committing itself, in all matters, to *Shari'ah* laws.

These principles are not new or innovated, but they are established facts which cannot he ignored by any Muslim, let alone be denied. Unfortunately, most of these fundamentals have slipped from the minds of most of those working for this Deen. Some people know some fundamentals hut ignore others. Others implement some but neglect others.

While these principles and fundamentals of *Shari'ah* have been long absent and intentionally been kept away, we take it upon ourselves to introduce, or to display, them as an advice to our *Ummah* because it is a duty and an obligation. By this, we aim to elucidate the characteristics of the path, determine its objective and to indicate how to follow its course. Our endeavor is to clarify the picture for men who boldly embark upon Islamic activities so that the Islamic movement would not be deflected in the middle of its progress or divert from the right path to different paths. Furthermore, such paths are diverse and difficult. Also, we will not forget our objective, nor be confused, nor neglect our duty to commit the Islamic movement to *Shari'ah* principles, which if abandoned, will make the movement lose all hopes of victory.

This is our purpose in presenting these principles and fundamentals. Once they become clear and more deeply rooted in people's minds, we could, then, unite in a single group in order to work for the benefit of Islam. Therefore, these fundamentals will be like a compulsory introduction in order to reach an imperative intellectual unity before starting our progress.

Whoever overlooks this intellectual unity which we pursue, and exceeds it to give first priority to the people's assembly is making a grave mistake, because his movement contains, without his knowledge, elements of its disintegration. An assembly with no compatibility among its members is a disorganized collection of heterogeneous ideas and concepts, which, in the first real test, will break up and may even fight each other.

Any assembly which aims to work for the welfare of Islam but whose members have not yet agreed about the legal fundamentals (based on *Shari'ah)* which should govern this assembly, the members of this assembly, leaders and soldiers, must ask these questions:

- **What is our Ultimate Goal?**
- **What is our Aqeedah?**
- **What is our Understanding?**
- **What is our Aim?**
- **What is our Methodology to achieve this aim?**
- **What is our Provision?**
- **To whom shall our Loyalty be?**

- **Who is our Enemy?**
- **Whom shall we accept in our assembly?**
- **Whom shall we Dismiss and refuse and why?**

We do not need to mention that answers to these questions must be sprung from Islam alone. Islam as revealed by Allah (SWT) to His Messenger Muhammad ﷺ as the Companions of the Prophet understood it and as our worthy ancestors taught us.

If we do what is right, it is only from Allah (SWT) :

"Whatever good reaches you is from Allah," [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 79.]

All praise is to Him. If we do what is wrong, it is from ourselves :

"But whatever evil befalls you is from yourself," [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 79.]

Was Salamu alaikum wa Rahmatullah.

Liman Turrah Prison

25 Jamadi ul-Awla 1404

27 February 1984

Part One: Our Ultimate Goal

To attain the Pleasure of Allah (SWT) by:

1. Directing our sincere devotion to Him alone.
2. Achieving the true following of His messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ).

Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree (ra) relates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allah, the Lord of Honour and Glory, will call the inmates of Paradise, 'O Residents of Paradise!' They will respond, 'Here we are, our Lord, and all good is in Your Hands. 'He will ask them: 'Are you now pleased?' They will answer: 'Why should we not be pleased, our Lord? When You have bestowed upon us such bounties which You have not bestowed on any of Your other creation. 'He will then say to them: 'Shall I not bestow upon you something even better than that?' The inhabitants of Paradise will inquire: 'What could be better than that?' Allah will say, 'I bestow upon you My Pleasure and shall never thereafter be displeased with you.'" [5]

Verily, our Lord, Your Pleasure is more exalted and precious than any felicity. We put Your pleasure above and before all else. By doing so we follow in the footsteps of our Prophet (ﷺ) who sought Your pleasure before asking for Paradise in his supplications: "*O Allah, I ask You for Your Pleasure and Paradise.*"

Allah (SWT) is indeed more precious to us than anything else, and He is Greater than all else. His pleasure is also more valuable than any other objective:

"But the greatest bliss is the good Pleasure of Allah: that is the supreme success." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 72.]

Allah, Exalted is He, is the First: there is nothing before Him; and He is the Last: there is nothing after Him. He is the Most High: there is nothing above Him, and He is the Most Near: there is nothing nearer than Him. He is the Ever-Living and the One who sustains and protects all that exists. He is the All-Mighty; the All-Wise; the All-Aware; the All-Knowing; the All-Seeing; the Owner of Power; the Most Strong. He has power over all things; everything is in need of Him; all actions are easy for Him; and He is in need of nothing whatsoever:

"There is nothing like unto Him; and He is the All-Hearer, the Ever-Watching." [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 11.]

It is He who creates all things from nothing and provides after destitution. He gives life and causes death. He resurrects the dead from their graves; and to Him will be the final return on the Day of Judgment, when He forgives whom He wishes to forgive, out of benevolence, and punishes whom He wishes to punish, out of justice:

"Such is Allah, your Lord. His is the Sovereignty. None has the right to be worshipped but He. How then are you turned away?" [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 6.]

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[5] Bukhari and Muslim.

All save Him, Exalted is He, will perish:

"Whatsoever is on it [the earth] will perish; but the Face of your Lord, full of Majesty and Honor will abide forever."[Surah Ar-Rahman (55), Ayah 26-27.]

So how could we not consider the Pleasure of Allah: to be our ultimate goal for which we strive and break away from whatever opposes it, so that we can have recourse to its protection and delight in it?

"So flee to Allah (front His Torment to His Mercy) Verily, I (Muhammad) am a plain Warner to you from Him." [Surah Az-Zariyat (51), Ayah 50.]

Our Prophet (ﷺ) taught us that the Pleasure of our Lord is our refuge and shelter:

A'isha said: "I missed the Messenger of Allah in bed (one night) so I looked for him and (suddenly) my hand perchance felt the sole of his feet in the mosque. They were upright (in sujud position) and he was saying: ***Allaahumma innee A'udu biridhaaka min Sakhatika, wabimu 'aafaatika min 'Uqoobatika, wa A'udhu bika minka, Laa Uhsee Thanaa'an 'Alaika, Anta kamaa Athnaita 'Alaa Nafsika."*** *("O Allah! I seek refuge in Your Pleasure front Your Wrath, and in Your Pardon from Your Punishment; and I seek refuge in You from You. I could never praise You enough (as You deserve], You are as You have praised Yourself.")* [6]

The Pleasure of Allah, Mighty is He, is an objective before which all other objectives diminish in importance:

"And Allah is better [as regards reward in comparison to your reward], and more lasting [as regards punishment in comparison your punishment." [Surah Ta-Ha (20), Ayah 73.]

Whoever finds and attains it has indeed found everything could possibly need; and whoever loses it or is misguided away from has lost everything. This is the person that Allah, has left astray,***"...and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who, then, will guide him after Allah?*** [Surah Al-Jaathiya (45), Ayah 23.]

One of the mercies that Allah has granted His creation is His undertaking to realize this aim (of pleasing Him) for all those who seek it with sincerity:

"Allah chooses for Himself those whom He wishes, and guides unto Himself those who turn to Him in repentance and in obedience." [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 13.]

Allah, Exalted is He, never turns away anybody seeking His guidance. Instead, He assists and guides them to it:

"As for those who strive hard in Our cause, We will surely guide them to Our Paths (Allah's religion)." [Surah Al-'Ankabut (29), Ayah 69.]

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (ra) who said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: "Allah the Almighty says: 'I am as My servant expects Me to be. I am with him when he

[6] Muslim.

makes mention of Me. If he makes mention of Me to himself, I make mention of him to Myself and if he makes mention of Me in an assembly, I make mention of him in an assembly better than it. And if he draws near to Me a hand's span, I draw near to him arm's length; and if he draws near to Me an arm's length, I draw near to him a fathom's length. And if he comes to Me walking, I go to him at speed.' " [7]

How could we not then make Allah's (SWT) Pleasure our ultimate goal?

On the authority of Abu Dharr al-Ghifari (ra) from the Prophet (ﷺ) is that among the sayings he relates from his Lord, Exalted is He, is that He said:

"O My servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another.

O My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance of Me and I shall guide you.

O My servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food from Me and I shall feed you.

O My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing of Me and I shall clothe you.

O My servants, you sin by night and by day, and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness of Me and I shall forgive you.

O My servants, you will not attain harming Me so as to harm Me, and you will not attain benefiting Me so as to benefit Me.

O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you to be as pious as the most pious heart of any man amongst you, that would not increase My Kingdom in anything.

O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you as wicked as the most wicked heart of any man amongst you, that would not decrease My Kingdom in anything.

O My servants, were the first of you and the last of you, the human of you and the jinn of you, to rise up in one place and make a request of Me, and were I to give everyone what he requested, that would not decrease what I have, any more than a needle decreases the sea if put into it. [8]

O My servants, it is but your deeds that I reckon up for you and then recompense you for, so let him who finds good (in the Hereafter) praise Allah and let him who finds other than that blame no-one but himself." [9]

How could we not seek His Pleasure and aspire to be amongst His beloved friends whom he defends and assists:

"Truly Allah defends those who believe." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 38.]

Allah also says in the *Hadeeth Qudsi: "Whoever shows enmity to someone devoted to Me, I shall be at war with him… "* [10]

And can we not aspire to be among His beloved about whom He says in the same *Hadeeth Qudsi:*

[7] Bukhari, Muslim, Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah.

[8] This refers to the minute amount of water adhering to a needle if dipped into the sea and then withdrawn.

[9] Muslim, Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah.

[10] Bukhari and Muslim.

"My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with optional works so that I shall love him. When I love him I am his sense of hearing with which he hears, his sense of sight with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him; and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would surely grant him it.. "[11]

We hope to attain His Pleasure and we wish that our Lord will admit us in Paradise on the Day of Resurrection along with the righteous people:

"My worshippers! No fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve, (you) who believed in Our Signs and were Muslims. Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness. Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them, [there will be] therein all that one's inner-self could desire, all that the eyes could delight in, and you will abide therein forever. Such will be the Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of your deeds which you used to do [in the life of the world].Therein for you will be fruits in plenty, of which you will eat [as you desire]." [Surah Az-Zukhruf (43), Ayat 68-73.]

In light of all of the above, does our set goal equal other goals?
"Say*: *Is the blind one equal to the one who sees? Or darkness equal to Light?" [Surah Ar-Ra'd (13), Ayah 16.]

"Is he who walks on his face without seeing, more rightly guided, or he who [sees and] walks on a Straight Path [Islam]?" [Surah Al-Mulk (67), Ayah 22.]

A Muslim's objective illuminates his path, outlines his endeavours, regulates his footsteps, actions and positions. You find him walking on the ground while his heart is set on the Heavens. He goes forth one instance and holds back another; sometimes hastens and sometimes slows, speaks on one occasion and holds his tongue on another. During all this he is proceeding confidently towards his ultimate goal.

This objective makes the Muslim intolerant of neglecting the commands of his Lord or disobeying film in any way. For doing so would come between him and his exalted aim. It also makes him waste little of his time, lest it should come to nothing. He is cautious not to spend the fleeting moments of his life on anything that does not please his Lord.

One of the merits of a Muslim's ultimate goal is that it controls the means by which it is achieved. The goal does not serve to justify the means for those who wish to attain it, nor does it allow them to justify any means with a view to achieving that goal. Rather the goal controls the means which, in its turn, is controlled for it. The goal would not be attained by any words or actions unless these are done with sincerity towards Allah and in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ).

The early Muslims confined their objectives to seeking only the Pleasure of Allah (SWT). One of them would say: "I will make all my worries, one," that is, my only worry in this life is to please Allah (SWT), the Almighty. Their only concern in this life was to achieve His pleasure. Therefore they overcame any hindrance or obstacle on

[11] Bukhari and Muslim.

the road leading to this exalted aim and dispensed with all their desires and worldly aspirations. Their aim was to achieve all that Allah (SWT) commanded of them. Thus they became the most pious, most knowledgeable and most just of all people. Their Lord, consequently, granted them guidance and support and made them the mightiest of all people.

The majority of present-day Muslims, however, have strayed in choosing and determining their objectives. Some have put the Pleasure of Allah behind them and set off in pursuit of their own worldly desires; paying no attention to anything else.

Some even think that they can have other objectives alongside seeking the pleasure of Allah (SWT). Such people have become, as Allah (SWT) said (which means):
"A man belonging to many partners disputing with one another." [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 29.]

But Allah (SWT) the Most High is Self-Sufficient : He has no need of an associate. Thus, he who does an action for someone else's sake as well as Allah's (SWT) will be renounced by Allah (SWT) in favour of those whom he has associated with Him.

This is why today's Muslims, despite their large numbers, have become like the foam of a torrential stream. They have fallen into myriad vices. They are divided by whims and heresies. The Muslim nation has become, as the Prophet (ﷺ) said, a large bowl to which all the nations of the world call upon one another.

The situation is very grave. As a result of abandoning the sole objective for which they had been created, Muslims will not only live in humiliation upon this earth, as is the case today. They will also face a greater danger on the Day of Judgement, each in proportion to his negligence of and alienation from the true objective.

Abandoning the Pleasure of Allah (SWT) means nothing other than choosing Allah's (SWT) wrath as an objective. Let people delude themselves as they please. Let them call their erroneous objectives any modern name they like. It will never amount to any more than the wrath of Allah (SWT). Let them call their objective a struggle to achieve true socialism, or dress it with the false glitter of democracy, or capitalism, or Arab nationalism, or secularism. Let them say whatever they please as long as they have rejected the Truth :

"So after the Truth, what else can there be except error?" [Surah Yunus (10), Ayah 32.]

"Those are they who have purchased error at the price of Guidance, and torment at the price of Forgiveness. So how bold they are [for evil deeds which will push them] to the Fire!" [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 175.]

"And how bad indeed was that for which they sold their souls, if they but knew!" [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 102.]

We therefore warn our people saying to them: return to the right path:
"Answer the call of your Lord." [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 47.]

Return to the Pleasure of Allah(SWT) let your devotion be sincere and your struggle continuous:

"O our people! Respond [with obedience] to Allah's caller [i.e. Muhammad [pbuh], and believe in him." [Surah Al-Ahqaaf (46), Ayah 31.]

And know that achieving this great and noble goal is extremely easy for those assisted by Allah (SWT), and that the road leading to it is extremely clear for those blessed by Allah's (SWT) Guidance, for He (SWT) ***"...guides unto Himself those who turn to Him in repentance and obedience."*** [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 13.]

Those who choose to travel this road need only two things to achieve their objectives:

1. Sincerity to Allah, the Almighty by seeking His Pleasure alone, and;

2. Following the example of the Prophet (ﷺ).

l. Sincerity

Allah (SWT), Exalted is He, accepts no work whatsoever, be it great or small, unless it is intended solely for His Pleasure.

On the authority of Abu Hurairah (ra), who said that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said: "Allah, Glorified and Exalted is He, said: 'I am Self-Sufficient. I am in no need of having an associate. Thus he who does an action for someone else's sake as well as Mine will have that action renounced by Me in favour of him whom he associated with Me.'" [12]

A Muslim is required to dedicate all his endeavours to Allah (SWT) in all his actions and words, remembrance and thinking, sleep and waking, worship and daily living, love and hatred, giving and withholding.

"Say [O Muhammad (pbuh)]: 'Verily, my prayer, my sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. He has no partner.'" [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayat 162-163.]

A servant should be sincere to Allah (SWT) in all his activities:

"Say: [O Muhammad (pbuh)]: 'Verily I am commanded to worship Allah (alone) by obeying Him and doing deeds sincerely for Allah's sake only and not to show off, and not to set up rivals with Him in worship;'" [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 11.]

Sincerity is isolation of the intent in obedience to the Worshipped - Glorified is He - singling Him out alone in worship, restraining the heart from turning towards creation during conduct with the Lord, and cleansing the action from every flaw.

And one who knows the reality of the perfection of the Lord Most High, His Exaltedness, His majesty, His power, His wisdom, His blessings, His shielding, His gentleness, His kindness, His gracefulness, His generosity, and believes that He is:

[12] Muslim and Ibn Maajah.

“the First [nothing is before him] and the Last [nothing is after Him], the Most High [nothing is above Him] and the Most Near [nothing is nearer than Him].” [Surah Al-Hadeed (57), Ayah 3.]

and at the same time know the truth about created beings, namely that they ***"...cannot create [even] a fly, even though they combine together for the purpose! And if the fly should snatch away anything from them, the y would have no power to release it from the fly.”*** [Surah Al-Hajj (22). Ayah 73.]

and that they

"...possess neither hurt nor benefit for themselves, and possess no power [of causing] death, nor [of giving] life, nor of raising the dead.” [Surah Al-Furqan (25), Ayah 3.]
and that they

"...own not even a qitmeer (the thin membrane over a date-stone.)***”*** [Surah Faatir (35), Ayah 13.]

Those who know all these things cannot possibly dedicate their work to anyone except Allah. How could they possibly attach their hearts to any but Him?

On the authority of Umar bin Al-Khattab (ra), the Prophet (ﷺ) said: “Actions are but by intention and every man shall have but that which he intended. Thus he whose migration was for Allah and His Messenger, his migration was for Allah and His Messenger; and he whose migration was to achieve some worldly benefit or to take some woman in marriage, his migration was for that which he migrated.” [13]

Indeed, every action not done sincerely for Allah (SWT) is futile and wasted. The greatest works turn into calamity for their doers in both this life and in the next if they are devoid of sincerity to Allah. The prophet (ﷺ) informed us that:

"The first three people against whom Judgement will be pronounced will be a man who has died a martyr. He will be brought forward and Allah will make known to him His favours and he will recognise them. [The Almighty] will say: ‘And what did you do about them?’ He will say: ‘I fought for You until I died a martyr’. He will say: ‘You have lied, You did but fight that it might be said [of you], he is courageous. And so it was said.’ Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into the Hell-Fire.

[Another] will be a man who has studied [religious] knowledge and has taught it and who used to recite the Qur'an. He will be brought forward and Allah will make known to him His favours and he will recognise them. [The Almighty] will say: ‘And what did you do about them?’ He will say: ‘I studied [religious] knowledge and I taught it and I recited the Qur'an for Your Sake’. He will say: 'You have lied, you did but study [religious] knowledge that it might be said [of you], he is a reciter. And so it was said.’ Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into the Hell-Fire.

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[13] Bukhari and Muslim.

[Another] will be a man whom Allah had made rich and to whom He had given all kinds of wealth. He will be brought forward and Allah will make known to him His favours and he will recognise them. [The Almighty] will say: 'And what did you do about them?' He will say: 'I left no path [untrodden] in which You like money to be spent without spending it for Your Sake.' He will say: `You have lied, you did but do so that it might be said [of you], he is open-handed. And so it was said.' Then he will be ordered to be dragged along on his face until he is cast into the Hell-Fire."[14]

This Hadeeth shows us how the greatest and noblest of deeds turn into catastrophe due to the lack of sincerity.

The opposite of sincerity is showing off *(ar-Riyyaa').* It is the practice of performing any of the various forms of worship through words or actions in order to be seen and praised by people. It could take a pure form, as is the case of the hypocrites about whom Allah, the Almighty said:

"And when they stand up to pray, they stand with laziness and to be seen of men." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 142.]

It could also be by devoting works to Allah as well as to other than Him; or it could be the case where the work starts off by being devoted to Allah alone but later becomes hypocritical, when it is done with the intention of showing off.

Muslims are commanded to struggle against their selves and ensure sincere devotion in every action they undertake and to rid themselves of all forms of showing off. It is wrong to abandon good works for fear of showing off. One should do good deeds and be sincere to Allah at the same time:

"So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord." [Surah Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 110.]

Sincerity is both necessary and required in order that every soul may rid itself of whims and desires and make its objective whatever Allah (SWT) requires of it.

2. Realising the true following of the Prophet (ﷺ)

Sincerity, as mentioned above, constitutes but one of two conditions for the action to be accepted by Allah, the Almighty. The second condition is to follow the example of the Prophet (ﷺ). Ibn Al-Qayyim al-Jawziyyah says about those who observe sincerity in their words and actions and follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (ﷺ): "They are the true people of the saying: ***'You [Alone] we worship'***[15]. All their works, words, giving, withholding, loving, hating and apparent and hidden interactions are devoted to Allah alone. They do not seek the reward or thanks of the people, nor do they seek the high status in society. They neither seek to be commended, nor avoid being defamed, because they consider people as the buried dead who can neither benefit nor harm, nor do they have power over life or death, or the raising of the dead."

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[14] Muslim, Tirmidhi and An-Nasaa'ee on the authority of Abu Hurairah (ra).

[15] [Surah Al-Fatiha (1), Ayah 5.]

Only those ignorant of their Lord and of the conditions and nature of human kind would seek the pleasure and praise of people and aspire to high position and influence in society. Those who are aware of Man's nature and know Allah, prefer to devote themselves and their actions to seeking Allah's Pleasure and ignore the self-interested reactions of other people. All their acts of worship are concordant with Allah's commands and what He likes and dislikes. This is the type of work which Allah accepts.

Allah, Exalted is He, says (which means):

"Blessed be He in Whose Hand is the Dominion, and He is Able to do all things. Who has created death and life that He may test you which of you is best in deed." [Surah Al-Mulk (67), Ayah 1-2.]

He also says (which means):

"Lo! We have placed all that is in the earth as an ornament thereof that we may try them; which of them is best in conduct." [Surah Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 7.]

Al-Fudhayl bin 'Iyyaad said: "The excellent deed is that which is the most sincere and the most correct." He was then asked: "How is that, O Abul - Hasan?" He said: "The deed which is sincere but not correct will not be accepted. Likewise, the deed which is correct but not sincere will not be accepted, until it is both sincere and correct." The sincere deed is that which is intended for Allah's Pleasure alone; the correct deed is that which follows the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). This is exactly what Allah (SWT) says in the following verses (which means):

"And whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work, and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord." [Surah Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 110.]

and also

"And who can be better in religion than one who submits his face (himself) to Allah while doing good." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 125.]

Any work which does not follow these criteria will be rejected, much as he is in need of its acceptance. It is related by 'A'isha (raa) that the Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"Any deed which is not in agreement with our teachings will be rejected."* [16]

And any deed which does not follow the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) only serves to increase the distance between the worshipper and his Lord. For Allah (SWT) can be worshipped only in the way that He had commanded, not in accordance with someone's whims and opinions.

Realising the true following of the Prophet (ﷺ) is the evidence a servant presents to prove his true love for Allah, and by which he can acquire Allah's love:

"Say [O Muhammad to Mankind]: `If you [really] love Allah, then follow me. Allah will love you and forgive you your sins." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 31.]

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[16] Bukhari and Muslim.

The true following of the Prophet (ﷺ) can only be achieved if a Muslim rejects innovations and customary practices which people have introduced into religion. A Muslim must completely adhere to the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ) in his creed and practices, piety and conduct, his judgement and adjudications, his war and peace, his daily life and striving, his speech and silence, his remembrance and thoughts and his sleep and waking. Allah, Exalted is He, says (which means):

"Indeed in the Messenger of Allah [Muhammad (ﷺ)] you have a good example to follow for him who hopes in [the Meeting with] Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 21.]

"And whatsoever the Messenger [Muhammad (ﷺ)] gives you, take it. And whatsoever he forbids, abstain [from it]. [Surah Al-Hashr (59), Ayah 7.]

"O you who believe! Obey Allah and His Messenger, and turn not away from him while You are hearing." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 20.]

Obedience to the Prophet (ﷺ) is associated with obedience to Allah in forty different instances in the Qur'an.

All the paths are blocked for Man except for those Muslims who follow in the footsteps of the Prophet (ﷺ). For such true followers, all the roads of good are open.

Instances of contradicting the true following of the Prophet (ﷺ) are numerous. Some of these instances are as follows:

1. Adopting doctrines and theories and trying to reshape Islam to suit themselves.

2. Considering men to be a criterion by which to judge the *Shari'ah* and a measure of truth; and referring to them instead of referring to *Shari'ah.*

3. Putting words and actions before the Qur'an and the Sunnah. ***"O you who believe! Be not forward in the presence of Allah and His Messenger. O you who believe! Lift not your voices above the voice of the Prophet."*** [Surah Al-Hujuraat (49), Ayat 1-2.]

4. Following the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) only in certain aspects of Shari'ah and neglecting others. An instance of this is to follow the Prophet's example in ways of praying and fasting, for example, and not in ways of rule and government. Allah, Exalted is He, says: ***"Do you believe you in part of the scripture and disbelieve in part thereof?"*** [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 85.]

Attaining true following is the sole guarantee of rectification on the road of guidance and success and avoidance of wrong and stray roads.

"And this is My Straight Path, so follow it. Follow not other ways, lest you be parted from His Way." [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 154.]

In the past the Muslim nation became divided and dispersed due to the failure to act according to the Sunnah. Furthermore, the appearance of invention in religion and heresies which tear our people apart, ultimately leading seventy-two sects to the Hell-Fire are due to the absence of such true following. True guidance and salvation are only achieved through the following of the Prophet (ﷺ) alone. Every heresy and

innovation in religious matters is ugly. Its initiators are hated, their work is rejected, and their assistance is cut off.

This, Muslim brothers, is your objective which you should do your best to achieve. The means to this are to dedicate devotion to Allah alone with complete sincerity and to strive to attain the true following of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Were you to strive to this end and travel this path, you must expect to live among people as a stranger because most of them have lost the true path. It is inevitable for the people of truth to feel estranged in the midst of people of falsehood like the estrangement of light in complete darkness. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: "*Islam began as something strange and will be strange once again: may felicity be the lot of the estranged (its followers).*"[17]

People of this life compete for money and influence, fame and power. They consider this world their only abode and the end of their journey. It is their sole objective which they strive hard to attain. As for the people of the Hereafter, they are strangers in this life. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"Be in the world as though you were a stranger or a wayfarer."* [18] The heart of a stranger or wayfarer can hardly pay attention to anything other than his home and final destination.

"For Al-Muttaqun (the pious), there are Gardens with their Lord, underneath which rivers flow. Therein (is their) eternal (home)...". [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 15.]

[17] Muslim.
[18] Bukhari on the authority of Abdullah bin Umar (ra).

Part Two: Our 'Aqeedah

Our 'Aqeedah is that of as-Salaf-as-Salih, in general and in detail.

While the objective of a Muslim is his Qiblah (or direction) towards which he turns his face in any action, word or intention; his *'Aqeedah* is the engine that drives him from inside himself towards that objective. It urges him to move forward and prevents him from retreating or quitting.

Whenever *'Aqeedah* regresses or its influence wavers in the heart, attempts to work righteousness come to an end or at least suffer a relapse. The servant, as a result, moves away from his objective and sets about doing things which keep him away from attaining it. For a servant is either travelling towards Allah, driven forward by faith, or away from Him if he is tempted away by the devils.

'Aqeedah is neither a claim nor a set of linguistic issues in which only linguists and those skilled in rhetoric excel. Paying lip service to it, talking about it in an ornate style, writing pages and even volumes about it is not sufficient, indeed it is futile and of no avail.

'Aqeedah is certainly which takes root in the heart and is immediately reflected in the actions of the body. The Qur'an is extremely careful to emphasise this fact by reiterating the connection between faith and good conduct in so many contexts. This insistence clearly points to the fact that *'Aqeedah* must be associated with good conduct, for good conduct is a proof of the presence of *'Aqeedah* in the heart.

To prove that the claim of *Iman* (faith) is genuine, the effect of *'Aqeedah* on the actions of the body must materialise; otherwise, this claim remains unfounded:

Verily, those who believe [in the Oneness of Allah, and in His Messenger Muhammad (Peace be upon him) including all obligations ordered by Islam] and do righteous good deeds, they are the best of creatures. [Surah Al-Bayyinah (98), Ayah 7.]

"But as for him who believes and works righteousness, he shall have the best reward (Paradise), "[Surah Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 88.]

Whosoever believed in Allah and the Last Day, and worked righteousness, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 69.]

Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day and do righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 62.]

Whosoever believes and does righteous good deeds, upon such shall come no fear, nor shall they grieve. [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 48.]

And verily, I am indeed Forgiving to him who repents, believes (in My Oneness, and associates none in worship with Me) and does righteous good deeds, and then remains constant in doing them, (till his death). [Surah Ta-Ha (20), Ayah 82.]

Except those who repent and believe (in the Oneness of Allah and His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ)), and work righteousness. Such will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged in aught. [Surah Maryam (19), Ayah 60.]

But as for him who repented (from polytheism and sins, etc.), believed (in the Oneness of Allah, and in His Messenger Muhammad SAW), and did righteous deeds (in the life of this world), then he will be among those who are successful. [Surah Al-Qasas (28), Ayah 67.]

And it is not your wealth, nor your children that bring you nearer to Us (i.e. pleases Allah), but only he (will please Us) who believes (in the Islamic Monotheism), and does righteous deeds; as for such, there will be twofold reward for what they did, and they will reside in the high dwellings (Paradise) in peace and security. [Surah Saba (34), Ayah 37.]

And give glad tidings to those who believe and do righteous good deeds, that for them will be Gardens under which rivers flow (Paradise). [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 25.]

And those who believe and do righteous good deeds, they are the dwellers of Paradise, they will dwell therein forever. [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 82.]

The mosques of Allah shall be maintained only by those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, offer prayers perfectly, and give Zakah and fear none but Allah. It is they who are expected to be on true guidance. [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 18.]

What has Allah to do by punishing you if you thanked [Him] and believed [in Him]? And Allah is ever All-Appreciative [of good], All-Knowing. [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 147.]

These are explicit indications which recur in many verses of the Qur'an in such a way that only those with a blurred vision or blind hearts would ignore them:

"Verily, it is not the eyes that grow blind, but it is the hearts which are in the breasts that grow blind." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 46.]

The Prophet's (ﷺ) statements are also replete with indications to the effect that good conduct is part and parcel of *Iman.* The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Faith (or Iman) has over seventy branches; the most excellent of which is the declaration that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah, and the humblest of which is the removal of what is injurious from the road; and modesty is a branch of faith." [19]

"Whoever amongst you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand; if he is not able to do so then with his tongue; and if he is not able to do so, then with his heart, and that is the weakest form of faith." [20]

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[19] Muslim.

[20] Muslim, on the authority of Abu Sa'eed al-Khudree.

"...He who strove against them with his hand was a believer. He who strove against them with his heart was a believer, and he who strove against them with his tongue was a believer, and beyond that there is no faith even to the extent of a mustard seed." **[21]**

Not everyone who claims to have *Iman* with the tongue is sincere. Such a claim is false unless the signs if *Iman* are evident. The difference between hollow words and true belief is that between East and West. Let us present two chapters of two generations of our *Ummah*: the generation of the Sahabah, the best of generations, and that of the present time.

The generation of the Sahabah on which we are trying to model a similar generation in beliefs and practice was a generation which the Islamic *'Aqeedah* had rescued from the claws of Jaahiliyyah, cleansed from the squalor of Shirk and instilled in their hearts the truth of faith in order to illuminate their lives with the light of Tawheed.

'Aqeedah alone was the decisive factor in forming this generation, and moulding the character of its members. We would like to take a closer look at the different aspects through which this *'Aqeedah* manifested itself and see how it affected their lives. There are so many examples to survey that we do not know which one to choose. Shall we talk about the Muhaajiroon or the Ansaar? The elderly, the young or the children? The men or the women? Shall we talk about them whilst they were in prosperity or in adversity?

Shall we talk about them as horsemen by the day or as monks by night? Shall we talk about selling lives (to Allah) or the sacrifice of wealth? Or shall we talk about the light of obedience or the truthfulness of repentance?

In each of these illustrations – without exception – evidences and manifestations of true *Iman* sparkle, adorn with light and brightness. They dazzle the onlooker and make him wonder and ask: "What is it that took all these out – with such speed – from darkness to light, and made them the best o generations?"

We will wander in the vastness of these scenes, listening and observing...

This is Bilal defying Umayyah bin Khalaf, his master, saying *'Ahad, Ahad,'* (He, Allah, is one), despite the burning sand under his back and the heavy stone on his chest. And this is Khabbab adhering faithfully to the religion of Allah despite being tortured by red hot iron being applied to every part of his body. And this is the family of Yasir being tortured, and Sumayyah killed, but yet their *Iman* did not weaken; they steadfastly believed in the promise of the Prophet (ﷺ): *"Be patient and endure, O family of Yasir, for Paradise awaits you."*

Witness the Muhaajiroon who forsook their wives, children and possessions, and crossed the desert from Makkah to Madeenah with no provisions apart from their faith, emigrating to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ).

And look at Abu 'Ubaydah slaying his father on the day of the Battle of Badr, And Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq almost killing his own son; and Mus'ab killing his own brother, 'Ubayd bin 'Umair.

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[21] Muslim.

Let us go back a little and see the Ansaar reaching out their hands with a pledge of allegiance to the Prophet (ﷺ) on the night of al-'Aqabah. They knew full well that the Arabs would unite against them and attack them from all directions and that the best of their men would be killed as a result of this. Yet they considered their new allegiance profitable and swore to fulfil their promises whatever happened to them.

Let us see them sharing their homes, money and possessions with their migrating brothers, the Muhaajiroon and, as Allah (SWT) said about them (which means):

"Love those who emigrate to them, and have no jealousy in their breasts for that which they have been given (from the booty of Bani an-Nadir), but give them (emigrants) preference over themselves even though they were in need of that." [Surah Al-Hashr (59), Ayah 9.]

Let us listen to them on the day of the Battle of Badr, saying to the Prophet (ﷺ): *"Go forth, O Messenger of Allah, to your desired destination, for we are with you. We swear by Him who sent you with the Truth that [even] you decided to cross this sea, we would all follow you into it, not a single man from us will fall behind. Go forth with the blessing of Allah."*

And here they are on the day of the Battle of Uhud, defending the Prophet (ﷺ), and seven of them were martyred in the process. And on the day of the Battle of Hunayn, when 12,000 fighters turned away from Prophet (ﷺ), 80 of the Ansaar rushed to the rescue and clenched victory from the tribe of Hawazin and gathered the booty. The Prophet (ﷺ) then divided the booty among the members other than the Ansaar, giving it to the first to flee and the last to return: those whose hearts have been inclined towards Islam. The Ansaar then asked the Prophet (ﷺ): *"What is our portion, O Messenger of Allah?"* He (ﷺ) said: *"Are you not satisfied that others return home with [the booty of] sheep and camels, while you return with the Messenger of Allah?"* They wept and said: *"We are pleased with the Messenger of Allah as a share and portion."*[22]

Let us return to Madeenah, to see Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq donating all his money to equip the Muslim army, leaving for his children nothing other than Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). And this is 'Umar Ibn Al-Khattab giving half his fortune, and Uthman equipping the whole army at his own expense.

Let us stand behind the trench, when the Ahzaab (the Confederates) besiege Madeenah for a month until ***"the eyes grew wild and hearts reached to the throats.",***[23] and suddenly the faithful, driven by the power of *Iman,* cried out: ***"This is that which Allah and His Messenger had promised us."*** [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 22.]

Watch with admiration the thousands of believers who marched out towards Tabuk with the Prophet (ﷺ) in the year of difficulty and distress ('Usrah), leaving behind the comfort of their homes and the ripe fruits, crossing the barren desert with

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[22] Bukhari.

[23] Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 10.

no more than meagre ration of water and dry dates, happy to accompany the beloved Messenger of Allah (ﷺ).

Now let us return to Madeenah and weep along with those who did not find anything to spend [on *Jihad*], nor could Prophet (ﷺ) provide them with any mounts:

"They turned back, while their eyes were overflowing with tears for sorrow that they could not find anything to spend." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 92.]

Let us search through the ranks waiting to meet the enemy on the day of the Battle of Uhud. Hiding among them we find 'Umair bin Abi Waqqaas, keeping out of sight of the Prophet (ﷺ) lest the Prophet (ﷺ) would see him and send him back because of his tender age.

Let us walk in the streets of Madeenah, awash with spilled alcohol immediately after the revelation of the command to forbid its consumption:

"O you who believe! Intoxicants[24], gambling, al-ansab[25], and al-azlam[26] are an abomination of Shaitan's (Satan) handiwork. So avoid (strictly all) that (abomination) in order that you may be successful. Shaitan (Satan) wants only to excite enmity and hatred between you by means of intoxicants and gambling, and hinder you from the remembrance of Allah and from As-Salat (the prayer). So, will you not then abstain?" [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 91.]

Let us listen to al-Khansaa' on the day of the Battle of Qaadisiyyah when her four sons were martyred: *"Praise be to Allah who blessed me with the honour of their killing."* It was she who said before embracing Islam in a verse of poetry,

"Were it not for the many mourners around me,
I would have killed myself."

And these are the Sahabiyat covering their faces because the Qur'an commanded them to:

"Draw their veils over their juyubihinna[Bodies, necks, bosoms and so on]***,"*** [Surah An-Nur (24), Ayah 31.]

And here is a woman from the tribe of Bani Dinar who, having been told the deaths of her husband, father and brother in the Battle of Uhud, said: *"How did the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) fare?"* The answer was that he fared well. When she saw him [alive] she said: *"Every catastrophe, compared to your well being, is easy to bear."*

And we see al-Ghamidiyyah who committed adultery and, although no-one found out about it and Allah protected her, she insisted on confessing her sin and placing herself between the hands of the Prophet (ﷺ), pleading with him to purify her

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[24] Including all kinds of alcoholic drinks.

[25] Stone altars whereupon sacrifices are slaughtered on certain occasions in the name of idols, jinn, angels, saints, and so on, in order to honour them or to expect some benefit from them.

[26] Divining arrows used for seeking luck or decision.

through stoning. She sacrificed herself to please her Lord and to undergo a repentance so pure that it would suffice to grant Allah's forgiveness to seventy of the people of Madeenah.

And here is the noble companion Abu Dharr who placed his cheek on the ground and insisted on Bilal to step on his other cheek, in repentance for having sinned against him by calling him: *"O son of a black woman!"*

Standing before all these, and many other examples of the greatness of the first generation of Muslims, all we can say is to repeat what Allah said in the Qur'an (which means):

Muhammad (ﷺ) is the Messenger of Allah, and those who are with him are severe against disbelievers, and merciful among themselves. You see them bowing and falling down prostrate (in prayer), seeking Bounty from Allah and (His) Good Pleasure. The mark of them (i.e. of their Faith) is on their faces (foreheads) from the traces of (their) prostration (during prayers). This is their description in the Taurat (Torah). But their description in the Injeel (Gospel) is like a (sown) seed which sends forth its shoot, then makes it strong, it then becomes thick, and it stands straight on its stem, delighting the sowers that He may enrage the disbelievers with them. Allah has promised those among them who believe (i.e. all those who follow Islamic Monotheism, the religion of Prophet Muhammad SAW till the Day of Resurrection) and do righteous good deeds, forgiveness and a mighty reward." [Surah Al-Fath (48), Ayah 29.]

This was a page of the past, and it is rather hard for us to turn it over and be faced with that of the present. We leave it reluctantly and meet the present unwillingly. We look at our reality to find darkness everywhere; people's faith weak and shaky. Our present situation requires no elaboration, for we all see it and live its tragic circumstances. It is agonising to see our *Ummah* disintegrating, its *'Aqeedah* oscillating between Irjaa' and Takfeer and obsessed by heresy, whims and superstitions. Our rulers are openly and obnoxiously allied to either the infidel West or the atheist East, reserving all their love for the Jews and the Christians and directing all their hatred and enmity towards Islam and the Muslims. They have abandoned the laws of Allah and substituted man-made laws with His *Shari'ah*, and yet they claim to be Muslims; they are supported in this profanity by corrupt *Ulama* who confer on them such titles as "Khalifah" and "One who rules by Allah's commandments."

The Muslim people are forced to pledge their allegiance to the rulers, to approve their infidelity and go for judgement to their laws. Secularism has become a new religion, spreading amongst the people, propagated by the media and inculcated by the educational systems in the minds of the young. This new creed calls for the separation of religion and politics; that the mosque is for Allah and legislation is for the rulers. The corrupt *Ulama* teach people the creed of Irjaa'; namely that the acts are not required as long as "*Iman* is in the heart" and that all the people are believers, including the rulers. Sufiism, Baha'ism, Qadianiyya, Nusairiyyah and other misguided creeds are given free rein to spread their venom into the true *'Aqeedah* and propagate superstitions and heresy. On the other hand, as a chaotic response, the sect of Khawaarij with its various schools of thought, emerges anew with new vitality to brand all Muslims with disbelief.

We search amongst all these misguided sects for the *'Aqeedah* of our meritorious predecessors and can hardly find it. For it disappeared from the hearts and minds leaving no trace in the lives of societies or individuals, except him on whom our Lord has bestowed His Mercy, and they are very few!

All the examples we see around us are clear evidence that true belief is absent from our community and that *'Aqeedah* has lost its way in the hearts of our people, or at most occupies a small place therein. This is today's page bewailing the deplorable state of affairs to which we have been reduced. The darkness of today's page obscures the light we momentarily enjoyed while surveying our glorious past and the best generation of our *Ummah*.

Despite the wild, unbridgeable, gulf between the present and the past and the big differences between these two generations, they both claim to be true believers. True faith is a banner raised by both generations. One generation raised it with sincerity and conducted itself and its affairs in accordance with tenets of true faith. The other generation raises it as an inheritance and a tradition, but acts in a such a way as to conceal its true nature.

So, have we learned the lesson that an attestation of faith is of no avail if it is not accompanied with corresponding conduct and sacrifices? May Allah have mercy on Imam ash-Shafi'ee who said: "*If people were to study Surah al-'Asr, it would be sufficient for them."* Allah says in this Surah (which means):

In the name of Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. By al-'Asr (the Time). Verily! Man is in loss, except those who believe, and do righteous good deeds, and recommend one another to the truth and exhort one another to patience." [Surah Al-'Asr (103).]

We talk about our *'Aqeedah,* that of at-Tawheed. The *'Aqeedah* of the Prophets and Messengers from Adam to Muhammad (ﷺ). The *'Aqeedah* of our meritorious predecessors, As-Salaf-us-Salih' and of those who followed in righteousness from amongst the Muslim scholars and the lay-people alike. We talk about our *'Aqeedah* not for the sake of theological arguments or philosophical debates, but to rectify the beliefs of our *Ummah* and cleanse their *'Aqeedah* of the heresies and errors that have been planted.

We reiterate this so that it may take root in the hearts and act in accordance with its obligations. We declare before Allah our innocence from any heresy contradicting the *'Aqeedah* of our meritorious predecessors and we seek His assistance to prevent our actions from contradicting our words.

This is Our *'Aqeedah*

- Iman is a proclamation with the tongue, action with the limbs and belief with the heart. Iman increases with acts of obedience and decreases with acts of disobedience, and accordingly, believers are of varying levels.

- Sins and acts of disobedience diminish Iman but do not invalidate its essence, while greater disbelief *(al-Kufr al-Akbar)* completely eradicates it.

- *Kufr* (disbelief) is of two types: major (*akbar*) and minor (*asghar*). The first excludes one completely from the fold of Islam, thus branding him a disbeliever. The second is an act of disobedience given an exaggerated name for purposes of warning and repelling. The same categories of 'major' and 'minor' equally apply to *Shirk* (polytheism), *Nifaaq* (hypocrisy), *Dhulm* (oppression), and *Fisq* (evil-doing).

- A Muslim does not become a *kaafir* (disbeliever) by committing acts of disobedience, even if they were many and he did not repent from them, as long as he does not approve of them with his heart. The *Faasiq* who believes in the prohibition of the sins and vices he commits is not considered a *kaafir*, even if he insists on continuing with his wrong actions and does not repent and dies on such a state of affairs. His fate in the Hereafter is left to Allah who may forgive him or may punish him in the Hell-Fire for a time then take him out of it into Paradise.

- When Islam and Iman are mentioned together, the former means believing with the heart and the latter refers to the physical conduct. When mentioned seperately they both refer to the *Deen* of Islam as a whole.

- We do not judge as *Kaafir* someone who commits acts of *'kufr'* (disbelief) unless clear, undisputed evidence has been established against him by those qualified to do so, so that it would become clear to us that he has comitted such acts knowingly, intentionally and by his own free will.

- We believe that Allah, Exalted is He, is the Creator and Provider, the Life-Giver and Life-Taker, the Resurrector, the Inheritor, the Doer of all good and harm. We seek no lord besides Him, ***"Say: 'Shall I seek a Lord other than Allah, while He is the Lord of all things?' "*** [al-An'am (6), Ayah 164.]

- He is Glorified and High, Exalted above having a consort, son, partner or rival, ***"Say: 'He is Allah, (the) One. Allah as-Samad[27]. He begets not nor is He begotten; and there is none comparable unto Him."*** [Surah al-Ikhlaas (112).]

- Allah, Exalted is He, is rightly worshipped and the One worthy of worship. His slaves should direct everything to Allah Alone: fear, hope, rememberance, supplication, love and submission; assistance and salvation; entreaty; reliance; sacrifices; vows and all other forms of worship.

- We seek blessings from neither trees, nor stones, nor graves. We entreat Allah only by using one of His Names or Attributes, through good works we have done or through the supplication of a living, meritorious person. We neither walk around a grave seeking blessings from the dead, nor present sacrifices to a Jinn or to a dead saint, nor make a vow anyone apart from Allah. Whoever does one of these things has indeed committed *Shirk*.

- We accept no source of laws or judgements other than Allah, as we accept no other Lord beside Him. Since Allah is the Creator, He has the sovereignty, and thus rules, commands, prohibits, judges and legislates. Allah is the All-Knower, All-Aware.

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[27] As-Samad: *The Self-Sufficient Master, Whom all creatures need; He neither eats nor drinks.*

- Whoever legislates different laws to those of Allah and replaces His Laws with others, has gone against Allah's sovereignty. Such a person has made himself a partner and equal in jurisdiction with Allah, thus (he has) stepped outside the circle of Islam. If this person is a ruler, he should therefore be rebelled against and deposed.

- We confirm all of Allah's Names and Attributes which Allah has stated in His Book (the Qur'an) or mentioned through His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ) without changing them or ignoring them completely or twisting their meanings or giving resemblance to any of the created things. We do not even claim knowledge of what His Attributes are like, because ***"There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer."*** [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 11.]

There is none like Him, whether in His Being, His Names, His Attributes or Actions.

- We confirm those Attributes of Allah which He Confirmed for Himself and which His Messenger Muhammad (ﷺ)confirmed for Him, such as Knowledge, Capability, Hearing, Seeing, the Face, Hands and other Attributes which are not like any of those of His creatures.

- We say as our Lord said (which means):
  "The Most Beneficent (Allah) rose over the [mighty] Throne." [Surah Ta-Ha (20), Ayah 5.]

  Allah is therefore present on His Throne, over and above His creation. The fact that He is present over the Throne is known, but the manner of it is not. Believing in it is an obligation (*wajib*), and asking about such a manner is an innovation in religion (*bid'ah*).

- Allah does whatever He wills, whenever He wills and in the manner He wills. He delights, laughs, loves, hates, shows approval and wrath (in a manner that suits His Majesty), as has been stated in the Qur'an and the Prophetic traditions. In His actions He is like none of His creation and none from mortals knows how those actions take form.

- The Qur'an is the true uncreated word of Allah, not similar in any way to the speech of Mankind; it was spoken by Him in a way that we know nothing about.

- We believe in the Angels, the Prophets and the Messengers.

- We believe in the books revealed to the Messengers and we make no distinction between any of His Messengers.

- We believe that Muhammad (ﷺ) is the servant of Allah and His Messenger; he is the best and leader of all Mankind, the seal of all the Prophets and the leader of the pious.

- We believe that Muhammad (ﷺ) was taken by night in his bodily form while awake from al-Haram mosque [in Makkah] to al-Aqsaa mosque [in Jerusalem], and ascended through the heavens to whatever heights Allah willed for him.

- We have no doubt that the awaited Mahdee (or rightly-guided Imam) will come forth from among the *Ummah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) at the end of time (on earth).

- We believe in the Signs of the Hour. The appearance of ad-Dajjal (false Messiah, or Antichrist). The descent from heaven of 'Isa, son of Mary. The sun rising from the West. The emergence of the Beast from the earth. And other signs mentioned in the Qur'an and the authentic Hadeeth of the Prophet.

- We believe in the questioning in the grave by the two angels. Munkar and Nakeer, about one's Lord, one's religion and the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

- We believe in the punishment in the grave, may Allah save us from it, for those who deserve it. The grave is either one of the meadows of Paradise or one of the pits of the Hell-Fire, and each servant gets what he deserves.

- We believe in the resurrection of Mankind from the graves on the Day of Judgement to be set before Allah. We believe in the Reckoning, the reading of the book (account of deeds), the Scale (on which the deeds will be weighed), as-Sirat (the bridge set over Hell-Fire), and punishment and reward.

- We believe that the Intercession which the Prophet (ﷺ) reserved for his *Ummah* on the Day of Judgement is true.

- We believe in Al-Hawd, the Pool which Allah will grant the Prophet (ﷺ) as an honour to quench the thirst of his *Ummah* on the Day of Judgement.

- We believe that Paradise and Hell are both true. They are created and will never vanish.

- We believe that the people of Paradise will see their Lord directly, without their vision being all-encompassing and without the manner of their vision being known. As Allah, Exalted is He, said (which means):
  "Some faces that Day will be shining and radiant, looking at their Lord (Allah)." [Surah Al-Qiyaamah (75), Ayah 22-23.]

- We believe in al-Qadar (Divine Decree), the good of it and the bad of it, and say as Allah said (which means):
  "Say: All things are from Allah." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 78.]

  Good and evil are therefore both from Allah's Decree. Everything in the universe occurs by His Will.

- We believe Allah, Exalted is He, does not command His slaves to be disbelievers or to be disobedient, nor is He pleased with them being so:
  "He likes not disbelief for His slaves." [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 7.]

  And if He, Exalted is He, preordains infidelity for the infidel, He does so for reasons only He knows: out of justice from Allah, transgression from the servant against his own soul, and as a punishment for previous sins he had committed:
  "Whatever of good reaches you (is from Allah), but whatever of evil befalls you, is from yourself." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 79.]

  All this happens in accordance with Allah's Will. Whatever Allah wills will be, and whatever He does not will, will not be. And Allah is never unjust to any of His servants:

"Surely, Allah wrongs not even of the weight of an atom (or small ant)." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 40.]

- We believe Allah created the actions of His slaves: ***"Allah has created you and what you make."*** [Surah As-Saaffaat (37), Ayah 96.] and the slaves execute their own actions in reality, not metaphorically.

- We love the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), may Allah be pleased with them all; they are the best of all generations. We remember their merits, hold them in high esteem and display *Walaa'* to them. We also abstain from the things they disagreed upon. Love of them is part of Islam, part of *Iman* and part of *Ihsan* (excellent behaviour). Hatred of them is disbelief and hypocrisy.

- We confirm the Caliphate first to Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq, due to his excellence and superiority over the rest of the *Ummah*; then to 'Umar bin al-Khattab; then to 'Uthman bin 'Affan; then to 'Ali bin Abee Taalib, may Allah be pleased with them all. They are the Rightly-Guided Caliphs and upright leaders about whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"So you must keep to my Sunnah and to the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs; cling to it stubbornly."*[28]

- The scholars of *as-Salaf* (the first generation of this *Ummah* and those who followed in their footsteps) must only be spoken about in the best way. Anyone who speaks ill of them is surely not on the right path.

This is our *'Aqeedah* which is more precious to us than our own lives. It has stood the test of time and remained firm for fourteen centuries. It will continue to remain so in the face of all the onslaughts of the disbelievers, the spreading of doubt by the hypocrites and the innovations of the heretics. It has also been steadfast despite the remiss and negligence of many Muslims.

The survival and endurance of our *'Aqeedah* is in itself proof that is from Allah, the Mighty and Exalted. All creeds have become extinct and all religions have been altered, but Islam alone remained pure and true because it is the only Truth which cannot be affected by falsehood or shaken by doubt. Allah, Exalted is He, says (which means):

"Verily We: it is We Who have sent down adh-Dhikr [the Qur'an] and surely We will guard it [from corruption]." [Surah Al-Hijr (15), Ayah 9.]

It is a creed which provides us with a strong, correct base from which we can go forth towards our objective; confident that Allah Alone is the true God worthy of worship. This is so because He is the Owner who rules with authority in what He owns and because He has all the Attributes of perfection. Behind or above Him there are no objectives for us, nor is there any objective greater than this, for He is the Greatest.

It is a creed which gives total authority to Allah, makes attesting and submitting to this authority one of the conditions of *Iman*, and makes adhering to one of its prerequisites and a sign of its sincerity:

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[28] Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi on the authority of Abu Najeeh al-'Irbaadh bin Saariyah. (Hadeeth Hasan Sahih).

“It is not befitting for a believing man or a believing woman, when Allah and His messenger have decreed a matter that they should have an option in their decision.” [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 36.]

“But no, by your Lord, they can have no faith, until they make you (Muhammad (ﷺ)**) judge in all disputes between them, and find in themselves no resistance against your decisions, and accept them with full submission.”** [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 65.]

It is a creed which refers all matters, even at times of disagreement, to Allah and His Messenger:

“O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger, and those of you [Muslims] who are in authority; and if you have a dispute concerning any matter, refer it to Allah and the Messenger, if you believe in Allah and the Last Day. That is better and more suitable for final determination.” [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 59.]

Our *‘Aqeedah* thus unifies understanding and eliminates any possibility of discord. It provides us with the objective and the path, thereby unifying the believers and placing them on the same path. One can see them seeking the same objective despite their being of different countries, nationalities and colours.

Our *‘Aqeedah* is a creed which sets up the individual as a watchful guardian over his own conduct in the world, responsible and accountable for it. For he knows that on the Day of Judgement it will be said to him (which means):

“Read your book, your soul is sufficient as a reckoner against you this Day.” [Surah Al-Israa’ (17), Ayah 14.]

By so doing, this *‘Aqeedah* instils in the heart of the believer that which prevents him from disobeying the commands of Allah and His laws and judgement. It also helps him return to the right path if he wanders away from it or oversteps the limits. It also drives him to continual and sustained striving in the way of Allah and endeavour to attain His pleasure.

This is the great difference between our *‘Aqeedah* and all the other ideologies and philosophies, and this is what makes it rise above them all. Islam raises this *‘Aqeedah* up to a high position which all the other doctrines and ideologies eagerly wish to attain. And due to the huge gulf between their creeds and our *‘Aqeedah*, they do not even cherish the hope of approaching its pinnacle, let alone reach it.

The creed of Islam gives its followers certainty that Allah (SWT) is with them, hearing and seeing, and that He knows what their breasts conceal and that He will resurrect them on the Day of Reckoning for Judgement and reward or punishment.

Saa’saa’ bin Mu’aawiyyah came to the Prophet (ﷺ) and recited to him the following ayah (which means):

“So whosoever does good equal to an atom’s weight will see it then; and whosoever does evil equal to an atom’s weight will see it then.” [Surah Az-Zalzalah (98), Ayat 7-8.]

To this the Prophet (ﷺ) said: *'It is enough for me not to listen to any other [verse] than this.'* [29]

Ours is an *'Aqeedah* which makes our Walaa, directed entirely to Allah, His Messenger and the believers. Apart from these, all others are looked upon with enmity and hatred subject to the degree of their remoteness from and opposition to Allah. It is an *'Aqeedah* which brings its followers out of the narrowness and insignificance of the life of this world to the expense and splendour of the hereafter. People of this *'Aqeedah* are always seen walking on the ground but their hearts are fixed on Paradise; they take their provisions for both this life and the next. They do not strive for a transient, base life, for they want to take from it only what will help them on their journey towards Allah and the Next Life:

"And the life of this world in nothing but play and amusement. But far better is the abode of the hereafter for those who keep their duty (to Allah). Will you not then understand?" [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 32.]

"And Allah is better [as regards reward in comparison to your reward], and more lasting [as regards punishment in comparison to your punishment]." [Surah Ta-Ha (20), Ayah 73.]

It is an *'Aqeedah* which makes those who hold fast to it lead an honourable life, knowing no humiliation or disgrace. Though their condition swings between ease and hardship, victory and defeat, nothing affects their lofty and dignified life through their faith, for they draw their dignity and honour from their Lord Who is:

"the Most High, the Most Great." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 255.]

and

"the All-Mighty, the All-Wise." [Surah As-Saff (61), Ayah 1.]

They do not draw honour from wealth or influence, nor any other power on this earth. In fact, they are a living image and the real encapsulation of the following verses:

"But honour belongs to Allah, His Messenger and to the believers." [Surah Al-Munafiqoon (63), Ayah 8.]

"So do not become weak [against your enemy] nor be sad, as you will be superior [in victory] if you are indeed [true] believers." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 139.]

It is an *'Aqeedah* which gives its followers confidence and peace of mind in this world and peace and glad tidings in the Hereafter. It also makes them eager to meet with their Lord, savouring, for His sake, all the difficulties and hardships.

[29] Related by Imam Ahmad. An-Nasaa'ee also relates the same account in At-Tafseer.

Part Three: Our Understanding

We hope to understand Islam in its entirety in exactly the same way in which it was understood by the leading trustworthy scholars of the Ummah, who follow the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and that of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs (May Allah be pleased with them).

We would like our being called `Muslims' to suffice, indicating that we understand Islam as understood by the scholars of our *Ummah* and our meritorious predecessors. However, the word `Muslim' is no longer enough to express what we actually want. In this day and age, the word `Muslim' no longer indicates how a 'Muslim' person understands his religion, nor even to know what Islam is!!

Indeed, it has become commonplace these days to find a `socialist Muslim', a `liberal Muslim', a `progressive Muslim', a `secular Muslim', a Muslim who does not approve of ruling in accordance with *Shari'ah* or is not happy with some of its penal laws, and others who do not believe in *Hisbah*[30] and *Jihad.*

This is a clear indication that Muslims no longer understand Islam as was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). For numerous sinful forces have, over many centuries, been busy at work, intent on distorting Muslims' understanding of their religion. Their aim is to make the Muslims' confidence in Islam loose and shaky. They also want to bring Muslims out of the fold of *Iman* to total disbelief or at least to a deviation from the main course of Islam in fundamental beliefs and practices. They have succeeded in disfiguring the facts about Islam and in obscuring many Muslims' understanding of it, with a few exceptions.

Our enemies learnt many lessons from what they had seen during their long wars against us, which spanned fourteen centuries. They learnt a lesson when they witnessed the Roman and Persian empires fall under the blows of Muslim swords. They learnt when they witnessed the return of the Muslim armies inflicting a crushing defeat on the Tartars in the wake of their invasion of its capital city and their reaching the eastern borders of Egypt after they had crossed Syria, Iraq and Asia Minor. They learnt when they saw Islam defeating the Crusaders' forces which mounted their attacks on Egypt and Syria for two centuries. They learnt when they saw Islam expanding eastwards to collect *Jizyah* from the People of the Book in China and westwards to annex Spain, the heart of Europe, and reach the gates of Vienna.

Our enemies learnt that Islam will triumph as long as it has staunch followers who believe in it. Followers who are convinced that it is the only religion which has the power to rule the world and regulate Mankind, be they Arabs or non-Arabs, black or white!

"And on that day, the believers will rejoice with the help of Allah. He helps whom He pleases; and He is the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful." [Surah Ar-Rum (30), Ayat 4-5.]

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[30] Hisbah: To enjoin the good, and forbid the wrong.

Our enemies lost their minds when they realised this immutable and recurrent law of Allah. Namely that Allah's succour always comes as long as Islam has staunch followers who believe in it and are determined to live by it, no matter how powerful and well-equipped their enemies are! That is why they not only ***"bite their finger tips in rage"***[31] but they also ***"made their plans; but their plans were with Allah. And even though their plans were such as to make the mountains move, [they did not succeed]."***[32] But Allah protected His religion and rendered their efforts futile. ***"This is of Allah's grace upon us and upon Mankind."*** [Surah Yusuf (12), Ayah 38.]

To distort the image of Islam in the minds of the Muslims, our enemies have been waging a desperate and relentless ideological campaign. This started with Qur'aish's slandering of the Prophet (ﷺ), saying that he was a poet, a diviner, a magician and a madman.

Nevertheless, the *Jahiliyyah* is still waging war on Islam and the Muslims. Sometimes attacking and at other times retreating, they stab this religion in the chests of its followers. As a result of this many Muslims staggered and fell victim to this vicious attack. To make matters worse, groups of Muslims from amongst ourselves joined the ranks of the enemy. They became callers at Hell-Fire's gates, advertising the products and commodities of our enemies and casting their arrows for them. They are supported by the governments of our countries who, on their part, wish neither rewards nor thanks from the enemies!

So who now can defend this religion when the overwhelming majority of Muslims maintain a confused idea about it. Muslim intellectuals have turned into mouthpieces of enemy propaganda and advertisers of heretic ideologies. Governments of Muslim countries extend their protection, with force at times, to the enemy agents. Only a small minority have held onto the true faith. But even among these privileged few, most have surrendered and declared their inability to resist this torrential stream and fierce hostility. As a result, they have accepted the distorted, amputated Islam planted in our lands, and gone along with the majority of Muslims in their heresies and wrong ideas about Islam.

Consequently, instead of prescribing the medicine, most of those working for Islam have fallen victim to the disease. Some have come to regard it as merely a matter of worship rites and rituals, and refuse to take *Da'wah* outside the confines of prayer and supplication. It is as if *Jihad, Hisbah* and ruling by the *Shari'ah* have become abrogated for them. Some others talk only about purifying *'Aqeedah* from fables and superstitions, while they turn a blind eye to the secular rulers who have substituted man-made laws for the *Shari'ah* of Allah, and are thus outside the circle of Islam.

Others concentrate on learning and teaching Islam and do not approach the questions *of' Da'wah* and *Jihad.* Others call people to the obvious Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) with regard to eating, drinking, dressing and marriage, but never to his teachings concerning *Jihad,* government and jurisprudence. Others collect weapons and raise their voices calling to *Jihad,* but they have forgotten to prepare the men who will carry those weapons and later rule over the land. The true followers of this religion, however, cannot make any progress with it, thus curtailing its activity as a result of their lack of understanding it.

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[31] Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 119.

[32] Surah Ibrahim (14), Ayah 46.

Blow after blow, Islam and its followers suffer setbacks and defeats. The masses passively watch this happen; governments and enemy agents give their support and assistance, while the few working for Islam are standing by helplessly, unable to defend themselves or their *'Aqeedah.*

To take Islam from defeat to victory, it is necessary to diagnose the disease and prescribe the cure. We must start to take the medicine, no matter how bitter it may be,

"But it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 216.]

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Before tackling the issue of our understanding of Islam, it is perhaps important to point out the Muslim's misunderstanding of their religion. We must find out who is behind this `poisonous' misunderstanding, and expose all those who attempt to support it or defend it. This step should be taken in order to know the position from which we have been targeted. We need to take precautions against committing the same mistakes as those before us did. We must warn Muslims to be alert, and get ready to confront this `expert' ideological invasion. This humble effort will serve as a contribution, to the best of our ability, towards producing a generation along the lines of the early generation of Muslims. A generation which understands Islam as the early generation did and adapts their methods, as a prelude to the position of leading Mankind which seems to have gone forever.

Islam means subservience, obedience, and total submission to the Will of Allah, Lord of the Worlds. It involves following the teachings of the Prophet (ﷺ), which consist of commands, prohibitions, rules and regulations which govern our lives. Teachings which provide for all the needs of Mankind everywhere and at all times, in order to attain success in this life and the Hereafter.

This is, briefly and simply, the meaning of Islam with which came Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and as understood by our meritorious predecessors and as we have learnt it from the scholars of this *Ummah.*

This is what our *'Aqeedah* confirms in our hearts, namely that ***"Allah is the Creator of all things."***[33] He is aware of everything. He knows what was and what *will* be, and how what was not could have been. He ***"knows the unseen. Not an atom's weight in the heavens or in the earth or anything less than that or greater, escape Him, but all is recorded in a Clear Book."***[34] He is the Wise in actions, words and laws. He is the Expert who knows what is good for His servants today and tomorrow. The Message revealed to Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) is the seal of all divine revelations. This final religion has come to all Mankind from the day the Prophet (ﷺ) received it to the Day of Judgement. All of Mankind is commanded to follow it,

[33] Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 62.
[34] Surah Saba (34), Ayah 3.

"Say, `0 Mankind! Truly I am the Messenger of Allah to you all." [Surah al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 158.]

"And whoever seeks a religion other than Islam, it will never be accepted of him, and in the Hereafter he will be among the losers." [Surah Ale-Imran (3). Ayah 85.]

This conviction obliges us to believe that this final Message came to encompass all Mankind within the confines of its Divine order. This message includes everything that people need in their lives. It came to show them what they need to do in order to head for the better. It came to decide people's *'Aqeedah,* worship, moral conduct, government, international relations, the leading of society, the settling of disputes and judging between people.

This is how the Prophet (ﷺ) conducted his life. He was the Messenger, the preacher, the ruler, the judge, the tutor, the army commander and the leader in prayer. The Rightly-Guided Caliphs who came after him followed this example.

On the authority of Abu Najeeh al-'Irbadh bin Sariyah (ra) who said: *"The Messenger* of *Allah* (ﷺ) *gave us a sermon by which our hearts were filled with fear and tears came to our eyes. We said: 'O Messenger of Allah, it is as though this is a farewell sermon, so counsel us.' He said: 'I counsel you to fear Allah, Glorious is He, and to give absolute obedience even if a slave becomes your leader. Verily, he among you, who lives (long) will see great controversy, so you must keep to my Sunnah and to the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Cling to them, stubbornly. Beware of newly invented matters, for every invented matter is an innovation and every innovation is a going astray and every going astray is in the Hell-Fire."* [35]

Our Prophet (ﷺ) received all his teachings from Allah alone. The Rightly-Guided Caliphs followed nothing but the example of our Prophet (ﷺ). This is ample evidence that the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) is sufficient for Man to manage the affairs of this life in all its aspects, as did our predecessors.

Allah says (which means), ***"This day have I perfected your religion for you, completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion."*** [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5). Ayah 3.]

This is part of a verse which consists of three statements, each of which provides ample evidence that Islam is perfect and all comprehensive and serves to be implemented everywhere and at al times.

'Perfection of religion' means that Islam has not ignore anything, be it great or small, incorporating everything one way or the other. This also means that no-one, at any time and anywhere, can add something new and claim that he has perfected Islam, whether this new addition is in the domain of *'Aqeedah,* economics, politics, peace, war or government.

'Completion of favour' means that there is nothing complete or better than this religion, for it contains no defects and nothing.

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[35] Hasan Sahih Hadith, related by Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi.

'Choosing Islam as our religion' shows us that Allah does not accept a deficient religion for His servants. He was satisfied that Islam should be the religion of Mankind, from the time He revealed the Message to His messenger, until the Day of Judgement. Let no-one now say that Islam was complete and satisfactory in the past but is no longer so.

It is not acceptable, therefore, to say that Allah created Mankind but then was unable to find a complete, all-encompassing way of life through which they could run their lives and manage their affairs. Nor is it acceptable to say that the passage of time and the changing of circumstances challenged the Will of Allah, The Mighty, The All-Knowing, by creating conditions, events and issues which He did not take into account and regarding which He did not make His rulings. This is a religion that He commanded all Mankind to follow until the Day of Judgement, ***"Glory to You [O Allah]; this is an awful calumny."*** [Surah An-Nur (24), Ayah 16.]

Allah said (which means), ***"The decision rests with Allah only."***[36] and ***"And in whatsoever you differ, the decision thereof rest with Allah."***[37] How then could it be claimed that there are issues and cases that are impossible to deal with through Islam and that we should step outside its tenets and relieve ourselves of its restrictions, in order to run our lives effectively?

Can anyone claim that he can come up with a doctrine or system better or more complete than Islam, in matters relating to economics, politics, peace, war, *'Aqeedah* or worship? No-on can claim so except those who are insane. Even if someone were to claim that he can produce a way of life better than Islam, would we believe him and abandon our religion and way of life to follow these heretical and unfounded claims?

The fact of the matter is that Mankind has never known, and will never know, of a system which is better than Islam in its comprehensiveness, completeness, exaltedness, perfection, wisdom, justice, precision, ease, and practicality.

Islam is all-comprehensive: it is a Qur'an and a sword; knowledge and worship; *`Aqeedah* and *Shari'ah*; moral conduct and government; action and reward; the life of this world and the Hereafter:

"We have neglected nothing in the Book." [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 39.]

Islam comprises everything: the correct *'Aqeedah:*

"Worship Allah and associate none with Him [in worship]." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 36.],

the humble and heartfelt worship:

"Guard strictly the [five obligatory] prayers, especially the middle prayer, and stand up with devotion to Allah." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 238.],

the command to struggle against Satan and desires:

"Do not follow the footsteps of Satan." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 168.]

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[36] Surah Yusuf (12), Ayah 40.
[37] Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 10.

"Have you seen him who chooses for his god his own lust?" [Surah Al-Furqan (25). Ayah 43.],

the command to be kind to one's parents:

"And show kindness unto parents." [Surah An-Nisa, (4), Ayah 36.],

the encouragement to seek knowledge:

"And say, `My Lord! Increase me in knowledge.'"[Surah Ta-Ha (20). Ayah 114.],

"Say (unto them, O Muhammad): `Are those who know equal with those who do not know?'"[Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 9.],

the command to adhere to good conduct:

"And speak kindly to Mankind." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 83.],

the command to govern by the Law of Allah:

"So judge between them by that which Allah has revealed." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 49.],

the command to engage in Da'wah and call people to the way of Allah:

"Call unto the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair exhortation, and reason with them in the better way." [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 125.],

the command to enjoin good and forbid evil:

"And let there arise from amongst you, a nation which invites to goodness, enjoins what is right and forbids what is evil. Such are they who are successful." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 104.],

the command to fight in the way of Allah:

"Fighting [Jihad] is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 216.],

the command to accompany the righteous deeds with the good intention:

"And whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work and associate none as a partner in the worship of his Lord." [Surah Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 110.],

the description of actions and their rewards:

"And whosoever does good equal to an atom's weight will see it then; and whosoever does ill equal to an atom's weight will see it then." [Surah Az-Zalzalah (99), Ayat 7-8.],

the command to obey the Muslim ruler:

"O you who believe! Obey Allah, and obey the Messenger and those of you who are in authority." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 59.],

the command to those in charge to judge with justice:

"Verily! Allah commands you that you restore deposits to their owners, and, if you judge between Mankind, that you judge justly." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 58.],

And to those in charge to seek counsel:

"And consult with them upon the conduct of affairs." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 159.].

Islam regulates the relation between the individual and his neighbours as well as that between the Muslim nation and its non-Muslim neighbours. It regulates the small family in matters of marriage, nursing and divorce as well as that of society as a whole. It regulates the relationship between the governing and the governed. It regulates the circulation of money in society, its sources and the areas where it is spent. It sets individuals as guards upon their own conduct in this life because they will be accountable for it in the Hereafter. It instils in the heart of the individual, deterrents which will prevent him from disobeying his Lord. It also codifies punitive measures in case he transgresses the set limits. In a word, it is a religion which regulates the needs of Mankind within the framework of an all-inclusive system.

How could any other doctrine challenge such a complete system? Allah (SWT) says (which means):

"Should He not know what He created? And He is the Most Kind and Courteous [to His slaves], All- Aware." [Surah Al-Mulk (67), Ayah 14.]

Any attempt to break up Islam is therefore an unpardonable sin, for doing so could only destroy the whole system. Islam cannot be established as worship without an *'Aqeedah,* or an *'Aqeedah* without worship. Neither can it be merely a set of beliefs and rituals without laws and codes to govern human relationships and interaction. We Muslims must not take part of it to the exclusion of other parts; doing so undoubtedly leads to loss and disaster both in this life and in the Hereafter. Allah says (which means):

"So judge between them by that which Allah has revealed, and follow not their desires, but beware of them lest they seduce you from some part of that which Allah has revealed unto you." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 49.]

Islam succeeds and triumphs because it is a complete, integral, religion. If any part of it is omitted, amended or altered, then it will never be able to triumph.

Furthermore, the world in which we live confronts us with many demands which we will not be able to meet unless we take Islam as a whole and base our actions entirely upon it alone.

Indeed, we are in need of a sound *'Aqeedah so* that our faith may become strong and our hearts confident. This will by all means lead us , to rely completely on Allah and to carry out our duties against all adversities. Such is the *'Aqeedah* to which we call and in which we educate people.

We need all acts of worship and rituals, be they obligatory or voluntary, because they are the only provisions we can take from this life to the Next. For how

can we travel without provisions? They purify our intentions and hearts, and cleanse our limbs. They are our weapons against our desires and against Satan. We strive hard to establish them and call people to observe them.

We need Islamic knowledge in order to worship Allah in the way He instructed us, to avoid deviation from the right path and become like ***"Those whose efforts have been wasted in this life while they thought that they were acquiring good by their deeds."***[38] Our goal is to acquire knowledge of our religion and to teach it to the people.

We need good character in order that our interactions may be correct and our behaviour elevated. We must treat everyone as they deserve, in accordance with the *Shari'ah,* and protect our own words and actions against falling into the `mire' *of Jahiliyyah.* We always endeavour to refine our character and that *of* the people around us.

We need to communicate the message of Islam to all Mankind: to the disbeliever so that he may embrace Islam; to the believer so that he may stand firm and advance; and to the disobedient so that he may repent. If we fail to do so, Islam will become extinct and its Message will be overwhelmed by the deviant creeds that pervade everywhere. We go forth calling people to this religion, bringing good news and warning of terrible punishment.

We need to enjoin virtue and forbid evil; otherwise, vice will spread and destroy our *Da'wah.* We strive hard to remove from our path, every vice we find and enjoin every virtue we lack, in accordance with the laws of Islam and in the light of the teachings of our *Ulama.*

We need to wage *Jihad,* for without it the flag of Islam will never he raised and the forces of disbelief will continue to dominate our lives. *Jihad is* the weans by which we can establish the Caliphate after having removed the disbelieving rulers who have replaced the law of Allah by man-made laws. Besides, it is the only way to regain our lands which have been taken away from us. We prepare ourselves for *Jihad* and encourage the believers to undertake it.

We need to adhere to the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) in all matters, great and small. This will instil in our hearts, love for him and love for Allah's religion. This serves as a sign of love for Allah:

"Say, (O Muhammad to Mankind): `If you [really] love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your sins, Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 31.]

We strive to follow the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ) and to call people to adhere to it.

We are in dire need of referring to the laws of Allah in all our affairs. We call to this and wage *Jihad* to establish the laws of Allah.

We need all these things and everything else that Islam brought us. To forego one single aspect of our religion is to invite failure and frustration for our movement and *Da'wah.* For Allah, Exalted is He, has promised victory to His religion which He

[38] [Surah Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 104.]

revealed to His Prophet (ﷺ), and also victory to those from amongst His servants who adhere to it. As Allah says (which means):

"Verily Allah will help those who help His [Cause]. Truly Allah is All-Strong, Almighty." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 40.]

Conversely, all innovated, forbidden systems and ideologies apart from this religion of Islam will know no victory or glory. How dare we neglect parts of Allah's religion and not act upon them and call people to do so? And what excuses shall we make before our Lord who says (which means) :

"This day have I perfected your religion for you and completed My favour unto you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 3.]

We have no right whatsoever to take part of Islam and claim that it does not belong to it; nor do we have the right to claim that only part is the whole of Islam. Allah has forbidden us from doing so in the strongest possible terms:

"Then, do you believe you in a part of the Scripture and reject the rest? Then what is the recompense of those who do so among you, except disgrace in the life of the world, and on the Day of Resurrection they will be consigned to the most grievous torment. And Allah is not unaware of what you do."[Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 85.]

Deplorably enough, there are many people today who put their own ideas before the Book of Allah, the Sunnah of His Prophet (ﷺ) and the understanding of our pious predecessors. Some of these call for living the different phases that Islam went through in the past. Some live with their *Da'wah* in the `Makkan Period', others in the `phase of calling secretly to Islam', others in the phase of `the defensive war'. Some have not even received revelations yet! And for ever phase they take part of the laws of Islam to the exclusion of all the others. Some neglect *Hisbah,* others abandon *Jihad.* Some forsake *Da'wah,* and others reject Islam altogether.

We must expose these people and expose their falsehood. We must also tell them to fear Allah and practise His religion in its entirety.

By Allah, they have abandoned those parts of Islam only because of their cowardice or because they found it too hard, but as for whatever is easy and appealing to their desires, that they adopt with no objections. It would have been better for them if they had admitted their cowardice, weakness and neglect, but they have insisted on twisting the teachings of Islam so that it may conform with their innate weakness, cowardice and neglect.

Worse still, they do not blush to claim that they have a deeper understanding, a sounder method and a more refined performance. They do not mind if the religion of Allah is lost as long as they still enjoy their position as leaders, intellectuals, philosophers and theorists.

We must expose these people because they are destroying the foundations of Islam and claim that they are building its edifice and shielding it against attack. They tear it to shreds and claim that they are repairing what time has damaged. They paralyse Islam, deprive it of all its weapons, sever its organs and push into a fierce Battle with a ruthless *Jahiliyyah* which will, in a short period of time, defeat them and

their crippled form of `Islam' and make people think that this defeat has been effected only because of Islam.

A question arises. Is Islam so inadequate that it needs such `intellectual guardianship' imposed upon it by people who undertake to delete, alter and confirm it without any evidence from the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and consensus of the Muslim scholars?

"Glorified is He, and High Exalted above what they say!" [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 43.]

Indeed, Islam knows full well how to manage its own affairs, how to guide its followers and regulate their lives, how to teach and educate them, and how to set priorities and plans of action for them. Islam knows full well how to conduct the battle with *Jahiliyyah:* when to attack, when to withdraw and when to hold firm.

The scholars of our *Ummah* have explained and elaborated upon all these points, and there will always be, in every generation, scholars who will undertake to expound this to Mankind. As for those who follow heresy and their own whims, Islam is self-sufficient and can dispense with them, their 'guardianship' and their theories. It does not want them to serve under its banner, whether in conducting *Da'wah* or waging *Jihad.* Islam needs true and sincere believers who submit to its commands, without altering, deleting, or adding anything to it.

Those people who want to impose `guardianship' on Islam should have it imposed on them due to their poor opinions and low intelligence. They failed to understand this religion or rise to its loftiness and glory because of their meagre understanding and intelligence; and so they want Islam to come down to them instead and sink to their level!

We know from the teachings of Islam and from the explanations of our Muslim scholars that *Jihad* ceases to be an obligation due to the inability to wage it, but it is still binding upon us to prepare ourselves for it until such a time when we are able to carry it out. We also know that forbidding vice does not become obligatory if it is likely that doing so would lead to a greater evil than the vice in question. In such a case, the forbidding of vice itself becomes forbidden. But the application of these rules is only permissible under certain circumstances. It is an unforgivable crime to abandon *Jihad* or *Hisbah* altogether on the grounds that we are in a weak position and start, accordingly, inventing new rules or reviving the abrogated ones. To adopt such a position simply means the perpetuation of this phase of weakness. After Allah (SWT) has perfected our religion for us, the instructions and obligations of Islam remain binding upon us at all times. If we find ourselves unable at a time to carry out an obligation we must work hard to acquire the means by which we can do so. To be content with humiliation and remain inactive under the pretext of being in a weak position is an act of betrayal which will undoubtedly lead to disgrace and ignominy.

Those who are content to remain in this `phase of weakness' and invent rules to perpetuate it will remain in such a state until they die and their call dies with them or they repent and come to their senses. We stand in amazement before the poor opinions of these innovators which none of our predecessors ever adopted. It is obvious that by doing so they seek to evade the Islamic laws altogether. Those who claim that they live in the 'Makkan Period' must explain to us whether

They should turn their faces in prayer towards Jerusalem, as the early Muslims did in Makkah, or towards the Ka'bah. Are they going to allow the consumption of alcohol? Will prayer at night be obligatory again? Or do the rules of the 'Makkan Period' apply only to *Jihad, Hisbah* and speaking the truth?

The only true criterion for a correct and complete understanding of Islam is to find out how the pious predecessors of this *Ummah* understood it. Namely the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), the Tabi'oon and those who followed in their footsteps from amongst the trustworthy scholars of our *Ummah,* who did not invent, change or alter anything of the religion. Those who applied the words of the Prophet(ﷺ): *"Adhere to my Sunnah and the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs who succeed me. Cling to them stubbornly."*[39]

True to the words of the Prophet (ﷺ), we do not deviate from the understanding of the early Muslims and we do not replace it with any other because they are our guide whose light leads the way to the true Islam revealed to Muhammad (ﷺ). The Message of this religion has been carried in every generation by its scholars whom Allah has chosen to bear this trust. It is these scholars, from every generation, who followed the Sunnah of the Prophet it and adhered to it, and thus had the way leading to Allah paved before them. Whoever wants to find this true path must follow their example.

Al-Awza'ee said, "Bear patiently with [the practice on the Sunnah, hold the same position as they [Sahabah] did, say what they said, avoid what they avoided, and follow in the footsteps of the pious predecessors."

Whoever wants Islam with which the trustworthy Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) came must follow in the footsteps of Abu Bakr, 'Umar bin Al-Khattab, 'Uthman bin 'Affan, 'Ali bin Abee Talib, Zayd bin Thaahit, 'Abdullah bin Mas'ood, 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, 'Abdullah bin 'Abbaas, 'Abdullah bin 'Amr bin al-'Aas, Sa'eed bin Al-Musayyib, Khaarijah bin Zayd, 'Urwah bin az-Zubayr, Sulayman bin Yasaar, 'Abdullah bin 'Abdullah bin 'Utbah, Abu Bakr bin 'Abdur-Rahman, Salim bin 'Abdullah bin 'Umar, Imam Abu Hanifah, Imam Malik Imam ash-Shafi'ee and Imam Ahmad. He must take the example of al-Bukhari, Muslim, Ibn Mu'een, al-Madeenee, Ibn Taymeeyah, adh-Dhahabee, Ibn Al-Qayyim and Ibn Rajab, and many others.

As for those who are pleased with other than Islam, they have ***"indeed gone astray from the right path."***[40] They have gone astray because they have not chosen the truth: ***"So after the truth, what else, can there be except error?"*** [Surah Yunus (10), Ayah 32.]

It is the understanding of our pious predecessors that we must follow, because they possessed means of Ijtihad and enjoyed the mental faculties. At the turn of every century Allah sends in their like, those who can revive the religion for this *Ummah*. They are the Prophets' heirs and Muslims all over the world admit their true knowledge, virtue, sound understanding, and guidance. Their fear of Allah prevented them from withholding the Truth in return for worldly profits or compromises with their rulers. They would present themselves before the Fire and the Garden before uttering a word. They acted upon the verse (which means) :

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[39] Tirmidhi.
[40] Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 12.

"Those who convey the Message of Allah and fear Him, and fear none except Allah. And sufficient is Allah as a Reckoner." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 39.]

They never put their own reasoning before the Qur'an and the Sunnah. They simply said that their opinions were but evidence supporting other evidence. They instructed their followers to dismiss any of their opinions which did not conform to the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and exonerated the religion of Allah from any mistake any of them might make. They warned people against accepting the permission of any scholar. They also said that the teachings of any man could be taken and rejected except those of the Prophet (ﷺ). They are the ones who did not indulge in excess or restraint, but remained a people of the middle course.

They sincerely devoted themselves to Allah, followed the Sunnah and held fast to their true religion. Allah therefore protected them against consensus over an erroneous judgement and honoured them as the bearers of the banner of Islam and as milestones on the Path of Truth which cannot be reached except by those who follow their example. Allah says (which means):

"And whoever contradicts and opposes the Messenger after the Guidance [of Allah] has been manifested unto him, and follows other than the believers' way, we shall keep him in the path he has chosen, and burn him in Hell: what an evil destination." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 115.]

Following the guidance of our pious predecessors is our guarantee against deviation and heresy. It is the sure key to becoming part of the 'victorious group' of believers about whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"A group of my Ummah will continue to fight for the Truth, victorious until the Day of Judgement".*[41]

Following any path other than that of Islam remains a false claim and a big heresy; such false claims and heresies being abound in our time.

[41] Bukhari.

Part Four: Our Aim

1. ***Bringing Mankind to the worship of Allah alone.***
2. ***Establishing the Caliphate that follows the example of the Prophet (ﷺ).***

Our aim is Allah's command: *"Establish the religion."*[42]

We aim to establish Allah's religion in its entirety, in every soul and upon every inch of this earth, in every home, institution and society. To achieve this, we must first succeed in:

1. Bringing people to the worship of their Lord, and

2. Establishing a Caliphate based upon the foundations laid down by the Prophet (ﷺ).

These are then the two objectives that we aspire to achieve in order that we may fulfill Allah's command to establish the religion of Islam.

We have said many times before that all human beings are the slaves of Allah and that the earth belongs to Him. Therefore, all people are required to enter the religion of Allah and the entire earth should be under the authority of Islam.

We aim therefore to return the wandering people who have strayed from the path of Allah back to their pure nature and bring them back to their senses. This is what we meant by 'bringing people back to the worship of their Lord'. That is in everything: their creed, rituals, conduct, dealings, judgements and customs.

This requires that the ruling political system which governs people and their communities should in turn be submissive to Allah. It should implement the Islamic laws and act upon them; a system which rules by Islam, safeguards the religion of the people and protects them against all the devils, be they human or jinn, who strive to take people outside the religion of Allah.

Living under a non-Islamic system means that people will not refer to Islam as a judge in their disputes and that they will not establish their religion in its entirety. This also means that there will be an authority which will divert people from the religion of Allah and absorb them into its own *Jahiliyyah* system, using all means at its disposal.

One of the foundations of establishing the religion is to bring into being a political system by which to rule the people and guide them, because religion can never be complete without such a system.

Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"It should be known that ruling people and governing their affairs is one of the greatest obligations of Islam without which the religion can never be established."*

Therefore it is our aim to establish a Caliphate following the example of the Prophet (ﷺ). To this end, we are using all the ways and means that our religion taught us: *Da'wah,* enjoining good and forbidding evil and conducting *Jihad* in the way of Allah. Each one of these

[42] Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 13.

means has its role to play to achieve this objective. Each has its own field of action and legal rulings. A detailed discussion of these points is to be found in the chapter entitled 'Our Way'.

1. Bringing people to the worship of their Lord

Worshipping Allah is the reason behind the creation of the Heavens and the Earth, the angels and human beings, the night and the day, as-Sirat and al-Meezaan, Paradise and Hell. The whole universe was not created in jest:

"We created not the heavens and the earth and all that is between the two, in play." [Surah Al-Anbiyaa (21), Ayah 16.]

Nor were human beings and the jinn created in vain:

"Did you then think that We had created you without purpose and that you would not be brought back to Us [for account]? Exalted then be Allah, the True King. There is no god but He, the Lord of the Glorious Throne." [Surah Al-Mu'minoon (23), Ayat 115-116.]

They were not created without a reason and purpose:

"I have only created the jinn and the men but that they may worship Me." [Surah Az-Zariyat (51), Ayah 56.]

The only purpose for which they were created therefore is to worship Allah alone.

They were created to carry out their duty towards Allah. This duty was outlined by the Prophet (ﷺ) when he called Mu'adh bin Jabal three times, asking him, *"Do you know Allah's right upon His Servants?"* Mu'adh replied, *"Allah and His Messenger know best." The Prophet (ﷺ) then said, "Allah's right upon His servants is that they should worship Him alone and associate none with Him in worship."*[43]

This is the duty the servants must carry out towards Allah, mainly to worship Him with total submission, humility, love, reliance, piety, good conduct and fear, turning unto Him.

This is why Allah (SWT) sent messengers calling people to His worship:

"And indeed We sent Noah to his people, and he said, 'O my people, worship Allah. You have no other god but Him. Will you not then be afraid?'" [Surah Al-Mu'minoon (23), Ayat 23.]

"And [remember] Abraham when he said to his people, 'Worship Allah and fear Him. That will be better for you, if you understand. '" [Surah Al-Ankabut (29), Ayah 16.]

"And to the 'Aad people [We sent] their brother Hud. He said, 'O my people, worship Allah [alone]. You have no god other than Him.'" [Surah Hud (11), Ayah 50.]

"And to [the tribe of Thamud [we sent] their brother Salih. He said, `O my people, worship Allah; you have no god other than Him.'" [Surah Hud (11), Ayah 61.]

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[43] Bukhari and Muslim.

"And to the Madyan people [we sent] their brother Shu'aib. He said, `O my people, worship Allah; you have no god other than Him.'" [Surah Hud (11), Ayah 84.]

"And verily, We have sent among every Ummah a Messenger [proclaiming]:`Worship Allah [alone], and avoid at-Taghut (all false deities).'" [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 36.]

The Qur'an also recounts the saying of Jesus, the son of Mary to the Children of Israel:

"Surely, Allah is my Lord and your Lord. So worship Him [alone]; that is the right path." [Surah Maryam (19), Ayah 36.]

And this is the reason why the Prophet (ﷺ) had been sent *"so that Allah alone will be worshipped, without any partners."* [44]

And this is the aim that the Sahabah understood from the Prophet (ﷺ). Rab'ee bin `Aamir said to Rustum when asked about the reason he had come to see him: *"Allah has sent us to take the created [people] away from the worship of the created [false gods] and bring them to the worship of Allah, the One and Almighty."*

Man must, by his very nature, be a servant, whether he likes it or not. This is an inherent characteristic of Man over which he has no control. He must experience submissiveness, love, fear, hope and reliance associated with slavery. If he does not direct these to Allah, the - true God, he will undoubtedly direct them to false deities which ***"...can create nothing but are themselves created, and which have no power to harm or benefit themselves, and they control neither death nor life nor resurrection."*** [Surah Al-Furqan (25), Ayah 3.]

People should realize this fact and understand it properly: if they keep away from the worship of Allah, they will undoubtedly worship false gods which can do neither harm nor good. This is one of the immutable laws that Allah (SWT) established in the universe.

The Christians worship Jesus Christ; the Jews worshipped the calf; the Arab polytheists worshipped idols made from pressed dates which they ate when they felt hungry. They ate the very gods to whom they were prostrating a few minutes before, supplicating to them, loving them, and asking them for food and drink. There are people today who still worship fire, cows, trees, the moon and the sun. Other people are slaves to their own whims and desires:

"Have you seen him who takes his own lust (vain desires) as his god, and Allah knowing [him as such], left him astray, and sealed his hearing and his heart, and put a cover on his sight. Who then will guide him after Allah [has withdrawn guidance]? Will you not then remember?" [Surah Al-Jaathiya (45), Ayah 23.]

Ibn 'Abbas said, "Vain desire [in this verse] is [also] a god worshipped beside Allah." It is said that "There is nothing more evil in the sight of Allah than a vain desire [to which people are slaves]."

[44] Bukhari.

Ibn Al-Qayyim says about those who are slaves to their own whims and desires: "They worship other than Allah with love, fear, hope, glorification and humility. They love, hate, give and withhold for their desires' sake. Their desires are dearer and more beloved to them than Allah's Pleasure; desire is their leader, lust is their guide, ignorance is their driver, and negligence is their vehicle."

Some people are too proud to be slaves to Allah and instead become slaves to their wealth. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"Wretched is the slave of the dinar, the slave of the dirham and the slave of the bordered silk cloak. If he is given that, he is pleased, and if he is not given that, he is displeased, wretched and disappointed. And if he is pierced with a thorn, it cannot be extracted."* [45]

Ibn Hajar said, "The slave of the dinar [in this Hadeeth] means the person who is eager to amass wealth and keep it as though he is its slave and servant."

There are others who are too proud to worship Allah and so they become slaves to rulers who legislate laws for them, as did the Jews and Christians when they worshipped their rabbis and monks besides Allah:

"They (Jews and Christians) took their rabbis and their monks to be their lords besides Allah." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 31.]

'Adee bin Hatim said to the Prophet (ﷺ),*"But they (the people) did not worship them (the rabbis and monks), 0 Messenger of Allah. "The Prophet (ﷺ) replied, "They forbade the lawful for them and made lawful what was forbidden, and the people obeyed them. This is how they worshipped them."* [46]

Our duty is to shake people out of their slumber, make them aware of this fact and ask them:

"Are diverse lords better or Allah, the One, the Irresistible?" [Surah Yusuf (12), Ayah 39.]

We must shake them and say to them:

"O men, a similitude is set forth, so listen to it. Surely, those on whom you call besides Allah cannot create [even] a fly, though they combine together for the purpose. And if the fly should snatch away anything from them, they cannot recover it therefore. Weak indeed are [both] the seeker and the sought. They esteem not Allah with the estimation which is His due. Surely, Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 73.]

We must say to them after shaking them:

"Allah sets forth a parable: a man belonging to many partners, disagreeing with one another, and a man belonging wholly to one master. Are they both equal in comparison?" [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 29.]

We shake them and say to them to choose either to worship Allah alone, or to worship many disagreeing gods which do no harm or good, nor provide or create, nor honor or disgrace, nor bring to life or cause death:

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[45] Bukhari.

[46] Tirmidhi and Ahmad.

"And they have taken other gods besides Allah, that they might be helped. They are not able to help them, but they will be brought forward against those who worshipped them fat the time of Reckoning." [Surah Ya-Sin (36), Ayat 74-75.]

"And they have taken [other] gods besides Allah, that they may be [a source of] power for them. Not at all! They will reject their worship, and become their opponents." [Surah Maryam (19), Ayat 81-82.]

These 'gods' will disown them on the Day of Judgement and surrender them to their fate. It is strange that people reject the worship of Allah which brings them honor and glory in this life and eternal bliss in the Hereafter. It is really strange that they turn their backs on this, only to fall in the `mire' of *shirk* and the worship of false gods. They exalt these false gods, loving them, and approaching them with total humility and submission. These `gods', which do not benefit them in any way in this life, nor do they provide for them or help them, while it is they who protect these false gods. Furthermore, on the Day of Judgement these false `gods' will not intercede for them but will instead become their opponents:

"And set not with Allah another god [for worship] lest you sit down disgraced [and] forsaken." [Surah Al-Israa' (17), Ayah 22.]

"And set not with Allah any other god [for worship] lest you be cast into Hell, condemned [and] rejected." [Surah Al-Israa' (17), Ayah 39.]

Someone may ask, "What is *al-'Uboodiyyah* (worship)? Is it restricted to prayers, supplications and remembrance of Allah?" The answer is that these are only a part of it. *Al-'Uboodiyyah* encompasses all life on this earth and all the conditions and situations of Mankind. The type of worship that Allah demands from His servants is for them to say, with both words and actions, what Prophet Abraham (as) said:

"I have submitted to the Lord of the Worlds." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 131.]

It is to say with their tongues and actions what Allah commanded the Prophet (ﷺ) to say (which means):

"Say: "Truly, my prayer and my service of sacrifice, my life and my death, are [all] for Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. He has no partner. And so am I commanded, and I am the first of those who submit." [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 162.]

Al-'Uboodiyyah, which Allah has created us for, is that all our lives should be in accordance with what is pleasing to Him. That our day and night, our thoughts and words, our actions and movements, our life and our death are all for Allah, Lord of the Worlds.

Ibn Taymeeyah defined worship as follows: *"Ibadah (serving Allah) is a term that comprises everything that Allah loves and approves of from apparent and hidden sayings and deeds. So as-Salah (prayer); az-Zakah (charity tax); as-Siyyam (fasting); al-Hajj (pilgrimage to the holy Ka'bah); speaking the truth; returning trusts; being kind to parents; keeping ties with relatives; fulfilling promises; enjoining the good and forbidding the evil; struggling and fighting against the non-believers and hypocrites; being kind towards the neighbors, the orphan, the poor, the wayfarer and the owned beings whether human or animal; supplications and*

remembrance of Allah; and recitation of the Qur'an and the like, all fall into the definition of Ibadah.

Likewise, the love of Allah and His Messenger; fearing Allah; turning to Him in repentance; sincerity towards Him; patience with His Ordainment; gratefulness for His bounties; contentment with His Decree; dependence on Him; hope for His Mercy and fear of His Punishment, and the like, are also examples of Ibadah.[47]

Our aim is to bring people to the worship of Allah alone in all their affairs and conditions. The worshipper owes everything of himself and his life to his Lord. He has no option but to worship Him. If he does not, he is but a disobedient runaway. He does not have the choice of obeying some of Allah's commands and ignoring others, for in this case he will be like ***"a man belonging to many partners, disagreeing with one another."*** [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 29.]

Obedience must be in everything, great and small, so that he will be the like of ***"a man belonging wholly to one master."***[Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 29.]

Indeed it is the worship of Allah that most people lack and all societies need. Its absence is, undoubtedly, the reason behind the misery and suffering of many individuals, communities, governments and peoples. Just stop and ask yourself: "Why is Mankind suffering today?" The answer is simply that people direct true worship to other than Allah.

The Heavens and the Earth cannot function properly without having one single god to guide them:

"If there were in them (the Heavens and the Earth) other gods besides Allah, then surely both would have gone to ruin." [Surah Al-Anbiyaa (21), Ayah 22.]

The life of the world has become corrupted because people have taken other 'gods' besides Allah while others have rejected Allah altogether and taken other gods instead.

Ibn Al-Qayyim says: "As the Heavens and the Earth would be ruined and corrupted if there were in them other gods besides Allah, the same thing could happen to the heart. If there is within the heart a longing for a god other than Allah, this heart will become seriously diseased and corrupted. This disease will not be cured until this `false god' has-been removed from the heart and replaced with the true God who is the object of the heart's love, hope, fear, reliance, and turning to Him in repentance."

Indeed our condition will not be improved unless we remove everything else other than Allah from our hearts. People attempt to change their lives for the better, but their efforts will he to no avail unless they work towards bringing humanity back to the worship of Allah alone. As Muslims, we have enough insight not to be deceived by the hollow calls for reform which fill the world today. The most serious problem facing Mankind today is not the lack of resources, the suffocating oppression, the ravaging wars, the ill-distribution of resources, or the absence of democracy. The main problem is that people refuse to become slaves of Allah or that they are unaware of this issue altogether.

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[47] Ibn Taymeeyah, Al-`Uboodiyyah, Al-Maktab Al-lslaami edition, p. 38.

The correct starting point is to struggle continuously, seriously and intelligently in order to bring people to the worship of their Creator. Any other attempt will, without doubt, be a waste of time and effort. The real problem facing Muslims today is nothing other than their refusal to worship Allah and their blind emulation of stray nations in everything including worship of others than Allah. It is our duty to extend a helping hand to these Muslims and people of other nations, in order to bring them back to the Straight Path and teach them how to be obedient servants of Allah alone.

This requires that we should engage in *Da'wah,* guiding people and leading them to the Truth. Those who return to the true faith and become upright then they will be forgiven. As for those who stubbornly reject the truth, we will carry out our duty to rectify them or deter them either through *Hisbah* or *Jihad,* depending on the circumstances. People have the choice to return in obedience to their pure nature and worship Allah alone (who is their true Lord and Master). Or to step aside, taking with them their false beliefs and creeds, and leave the earth to be ruled by those who belong to this true religion: those who worship Allah alone with no associates. We cannot allow them to commit the sin of *shirk* and then impose it upon the land and the people, in legislation, way of life and government.

2. Establishing a Caliphate following the guidance of the Prophet (ﷺ)

Establishing the Caliphate is that great objective which has been lost due to the Muslims' ignorance and negligence. The mass of the Muslims do not know that there is an objective called as such. They think that it was an early period in the history of this *Ummah* which has long since vanished and will never be revived. Those who claim to work for Islam, on the other hand, either ignore it or neglect their duty to establish it.

We are eager to achieve this objective, driven by the commands of Islam and filled with a longing for its past glories. We aim to re-establish the Islamic State and its political entity which had spread justice in the world, over a period of thirteen centuries, from China in the East to the Atlantic Ocean in the West, and from Central Europe in the North to Central Africa in the South. Islam also commands us to re-establish our Caliphate and choose a Caliph to rule it. The entire Muslim *Ummah* with all its different sects: the Sunnis, Shiite, Murji'ah and others, unanimously agree concerning the obligation of putting a Caliph in charge of the affairs of the Muslim *Ummah.*

As we set forth towards this noble objective we hear the hypocrites and those with diseased hearts say (which means),

"Their religion has deluded these [men]." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 49.]

But we reply to them, saying (which means):

"And whoever puts his trust in Allah, then surely Allah is Mighty, Wise." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 49.]

We go forward towards this noble aim, knowing that the splendour of the victory we are seeking is in proportion to the volume of sacrifices we intend to offer.

We only accept a Caliphate which follows the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) and rules by Allah's laws. So, let our struggle and sacrifice rise to this level. Let our blood flow to cover every inch of the land we aspire to include under the Caliphate rule. Let us offer sacrifices as did the first generations of our *Ummah* who did not spare anything to establish the Caliphate. A Caliphate which ruled with justice over the majority of the world's population in its time, and whose capital moved from Madeenah to Kufa, Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo, and Istanbul.

It is true that the Caliphate knew periods of weakness due to the negligence of Muslims, transgressions of its rulers and the plots of its enemies from within and from outside. In spite of all this, it remained a custodian of religion, a defender of its sanctity and protector of its peoples and lands. Many were the ferocious onslaughts it had to endure. Starting with the attack of the Qur'aish on the embryonic Islamic State in Madeenah, through the Christian Crusades in the West and the Mongol hoards from the East, to the final onslaught by the satanic alliance of Christians, Jews and apostate secularists, such as Kamal Ataturk. Satan managed to gather all his strength and deal the final blow to the Caliphate in October 1924, after 1340 years in power.

With its fall, the gates were flung wide open before our enemies, who descended upon us with the hatred of 1340 years of enmity boiling in their chests. They carved our Ummah up between them, occupying the vast majority of its land and controlling the mass of its people. This military onslaught went hand in hand with an equally fierce, determined and insidious intellectual attack. `Human wolves' from every sect and religion embarked on seizing the Muslim *Ummah* with their claws, targeting Muslims' hearts and minds. Successive Muslim generations fell easy prey to this cultural invasion. Their *'Aqeedah* was distorted and their faith shaken and weakened. Some abandoned Islam altogether. Those who remained Muslims forsook virtually all the values and principles of the faith.

This intellectual invasion assumed the form of an all out and relentless doctrinal war, calling Muslims to false ideologies such as secularism, nationalism, socialism and capitalism. Free rein was given to calls to libertinism and the so-called freedom which stripped our youth of the purity and decency of Islam, and left them to the mercy of fleeting whims and unfettered desires. The media and educational systems have been employed in this war, supported by organizations and institutions run by Jews and Christians, and protected by governments and their armies.

The military invasion aimed at destroying the Caliphate which represented a political system holding the Muslims together, and succeeded in achieving this aim. The intellectual invasion, on the other hand, which aimed at weakening Islam in the hearts and minds of its followers, succeeded to a large extent in distorting its meaning and shaking its foundations.

Our enemies knew well that removing the Caliphate from the political life of the *Ummah is* no guarantee in itself that it will disappear altogether. They have learned that as long as Islam, in its comprehensive, all-embracing sense, remained rooted in the hearts and minds of its followers, this concept will drive the believers to reinstate it to its full glory. History has seen this happen many times before and the enemy has had plenty of opportunities to learn the lesson. This is historically supported by the fact that the Caliphate capital knew different countries, ranging from the Hijaz, to Syria, to Iraq, to Egypt and finally to Turkey. This time they want to uproot the comprehensive concept of Islam from the minds of Muslims once and for all, so that

once the Caliphate has fallen, nothing will be there to motivate Muslims so as to re-instate it.

It is for this reason that secularism has been promoted amongst Muslims as a new religion to replace Islam and to become the cultural and doctrinal alternative upon which many republics and sultanates in the Arab world are based, in order to supersede the Caliphate. By calling for the separation of state and religion, it aims to isolate Islam from legislation, politics and government. Religion, according to the new creed, should be confined to the mosque, used for preaching, permitted only in the form of rituals and acts of worship, and welcomed to festivities and state celebrations. It should never attempt to come anywhere near leadership and authority, for these areas are the preserve of the secularists. This new religion permits Islam to use only the pulpit, and nothing else. It refers to the state as being its prerogative while the mosque remains the only concern of Islam, and no-one should interfere with the affairs of the other.

Many a Muslim has adopted this new creed and many a state has been established on its basis. We have, as have our governments, lived for a long time under the oppressive burden of secularism as a creed, system and ideology. This creed, trumpeted by the media, covers all walks of life: the government, legislation, the judiciary, education and the media. It has also been forcefully implanted in our midst to spawn these ignorant regimes which have replaced the laws of Allah with those of Satan. These governments have given their loyalty completely to either the East or the West, instead of raising their voice with the saying of Allah (which means):

"Your [real] friend is Allah and His Messenger and the believers." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 55.]

It calls to liberalism or socialism instead of responding to the truth:

"And judge between them by that which Allah has revealed, and follow not their vain desires." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 49.]

It supports nationalism instead of Allah's saying (which means):

"The believers are but a single brotherhood." [Surah Al-Hujuraat (49), Ayah 10.]

It relinquishes our lands and dignity to our enemies instead of raising the banner of true *'Aqeedah:*

"And fight them until there is no more persecution and the religion is wholly for Allah." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 39.]

It moves Islam aside, derides its laws, fights those who call to it, kills its followers, neglects its set limits, makes the forbidden permissible and prohibits the permissible, destroys the religion and corrupts life.

The opinion of Islam concerning these regimes and governments is simply that they are disbelieving, ignorant and have no legal basis. They have no right to exist and should be removed in order to regain our Caliphate with a view to recovering our status and lands, establishing the religion, guarding it and ruling the world by its laws.

This is the objective which we strive hard to attain. We must stand up and say, "Here we are again, the followers of Muhammad (ﷺ). We have returned with the aim of re-establishing the Caliphate. As the scheming and intrigue of our enemies has continued unabated for thirteen centuries from the emigration of the Prophet (ﷺ) to the fall of the Ottoman Caliphate, our struggle and *Jihad* will continue, by the will of Allah, until such a day when we regain our lost Islamic State. We suffer and sacrifice the same way our enemies do, but we are not like them: we seek from Allah reward and martyrdom which they do not, and our martyrs are in Paradise while their dead are in the Hell-Fire.

The Caliphate which we seek to establish cannot be compared with any man-made political system that humanity has ever known. The foundation upon which our Caliphate is based is that Allah (SWT) alone is the legislator and Muhammad (ﷺ) is His Messenger who conveys His message to Mankind.

The right to legislate belongs neither to the Caliph, nor to his advisors, nor to the parliament, nor to a party, nor to anyone else; it is Allah's prerogative alone. Practicing Ijtihad to know Allah's judgement concerning new circumstances and issues which arise now and then, however, is not an act of legislation, but rather an attempt to know Allah's judgement concerning these circumstances through the methods which He approves:

"If they had only referred it to the Messenger and to those charged with authority among them, surely the proper investigators would have understood it from them [directly]." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 83.]

Finding out Allah's judgement rests with the qualified scholars who, in so doing, do not legislate for the *Ummah,* but merely infer Allah's judgement concerning the various matters and issues that arise now and then. Also; in carrying out Ijtihad, they adhere to the Islamic Law, its principles, rules and regulations and do not part from it an inch.

Our Caliphate does not put anything above Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ), be it a word, an action, a command, a prohibition or a legislation.

Our Caliphate refers all matters to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ):

"And in whatever they differ, the decision thereof is with Allah (He is the Ruling Judge)." [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 10.]

"If you differ in anything amongst yourselves, refer it to Allah and His Messenger." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 59.]

Our Caliphate establishes Islam in its entirety amongst its subjects and on all its lands. Islam also determines its relations with the rest of the world in matters of peace, war, alliance and treaties.

The Caliph simply carries out the commands of Allah and His Messenger. His chief duty is to safeguard the religion, protect it, disseminate it and rule by it in all worldly matters. Imam al-Maawardee said, "The Imamate is there to succeed Prophethood, by safeguarding religion and administering the affairs of the life of the Muslims."

Mutual consultation is one of the traits of the Muslim Caliph's rule:

"And those who answer the Call of their Lord and establish prayers perfectly, and who [conduct] their affairs by mutual consultation."[Surah Ash-Shura (42). Ayah 38.]

Justice is also a characteristic of his rule:

"And that when you judge between men, you judge with justice." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 58.]

Justice is what Allah and His Messenger have commanded. The Caliph's judgement in any case or his ruling in any issue is either directly derived from the judgements of Allah and Ills Messenger, or reached through a process of Ijtihad. The *Ulama* stipulate that a Caliph should possess the knowledge of the Deen that would enable him to practise Ijtihad concerning new issues and cases.

The appointment of the Caliph can be reached through the following methods:

1. **Al-Istikhlaaf**, in which case the existing Caliph appoints as his successor either a man or a group of men who will then appoint the new Caliph from their midst.
2. **Bai'ah** (or Pledge of allegiance) given by the influential people who are in power (Ahlul- Halli wal-`Aqd) to a man who meets the conditions required of a Caliph.
3. **Al-Isteelaa'**, or what is known as Imaaratul-Mutaghallib, in which case the position of the Caliph passes on to a new man by force.

Details of these issues are to be found in books of jurisprudence and legal politics. As for the conditions which the Caliph has to meet, then Al-Mawardi has mentioned seven:

1. Justice with all its comprehensive conditions.

2. Knowledge that enables him to practise Ijtihad when new circumstances and cases arise.

3. Sound hearing, seeing, and speaking.

4. Freedom from physical disabilities.

5. Sound opinion and judgement to manage the subjects' matters and conduct other services.

6. Courage and readiness to protect the land of Islam and its people and to fight the enemy.

7. Descent from the Qur'aish tribe, due to the Hadeeth evidence and the consensus of Muslim scholars.

Obedience to the Caliph is obligatory and is an act of obedience to Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ). All his commands must be obeyed, unless he calls for a transgression against the laws of Allah, in which case it becomes forbidden to obey that command.

If the Caliph commits an act of *Fisq or* oppression, he is not to be rebelled against unless his transgressions are repeated, in which case he should be removed from power if the `evil' of removing him is lesser than the `evil' of leaving him in office. However, this issue is the subject of heated debate among the *Ulama* of our *Ummah.*

If the Caliph, Allah forbid, becomes a disbeliever, then it becomes obligatory to replace him with a just Muslim ruler, even if this leads to taking up arms to do so.

The Caliph remains in office until his death, resignation or until such a time when he is unable to discharge his duties satisfactorily.

The Caliphate state is the correct implementation of Islam. It is the only political entity in which Islam can find full expression, and through which the laws of Allah can be fully established.

It is Islam, as we have said earlier, which has made it obligatory to establish the Caliphate in order to protect the faith and govern the affairs in this world. It is also Islam which has set its objectives, ideology and laws. Therefore, it is not permissible for any human being, whoever he may be, to change any of those rules; otherwise the state would become an ignorant, oppressive rule which must be removed.

The Muslim Caliphate is the ideal and only solution to the predicaments and problems from which Muslims suffer today. It is the remedy to the economic underdevelopment which led to our political dependence on an atheist East and West. It is the solution to the scientific and technological backwardness from which the so-called Muslim countries are suffering today. It is the only solution to the military weakness which left us unable to defend our lands and sanctuaries. It is the only solution to the widespread injustice and oppression between Muslims. It is the solution to the moral bankruptcy into which the Muslims have fallen, and the solution to the state of apathy and defeatism to which we have been reduced.

The Muslim Caliphate, therefore, provides a panacea for all our ills. The evidence of this is that it was only during the periods of weakness of the Caliphate that we suffered from those ills. And once the Caliphate fell those afflictions mounted and took on catastrophic and chronic dimensions. May Allah have mercy upon Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal who said, *"Fitnah sets in when there is no Imam (i.e. Caliph) to manage the Muslims' affairs."*

Indeed, the Caliphate is the ideal and only sure remedy to all the types of injustice, deprivation and enormous social differences from which Mankind is suffering today. Only a fifth of the world's population are enslaving and exploiting people in order to achieve affluence and form forces of oppression. The ruling regimes and prevalent ideologies in the so-called `developed' and `civilized' countries have managed to enrich themselves and boost their power and influence to the detriment of the rest of the peoples of the world.

Reality indicates the failure of all these ruling regimes, even in the most affluent and powerful countries, to work out a political, doctrinal and intellectual framework that could cast a benevolent: shadow of security over the international community, giving the less fortunate nations the chance to reach the prosperity and establish justice everywhere.

Ironically, they have established injustice and impoverished all the earth's peoples in return for their own prosperity and influence. However, when the Caliphate was in power, it managed to achieve justice and opulence in all its lands (which exceeded half the earth), without doing injustice to anyone.

The Laws governing the universe remain a stumbling-block in the face of any creed or ideology other than the religion of Islam. They serve to prevent man-made

laws from realizing prosperity and establishing justice the world over, but grant this right only to the Islamic political system which implements and rules by the religion of Allah. Therefore, the Caliphate remains the only political system which can bring about prosperity, justice and security to the benefit of all societies of the world.

This is the nature of our Caliphate which fell more than 60 years ago and which we are striving hard today to revive as another objective along with the other aim of bringing people to the worship of Allah alone, in obedience to the command of Allah (SWT) (which means): ***"Establish the Religion."*** [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 13.]

Many people will not believe us when we say that our Caliphate will certainly return to govern the entire world. They will say that it is but an unrealistic dream or an unattainable ideal, but we will not be disheartened no matter what people say, because the Prophet (ﷺ) made a true promise to us when he said, *"Allah drew the ends of the world near one another for my sake and I have seen its eastern and western ends. The dominion of my Ummah will reach those ends which have been drawn near for me."* [48]

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said: *"Prophethood will be in your midst for as long as Allah wishes it to be, and when He wishes, He will withdraw it. Then you will have a Caliphate, that follows the example of the Prophet, for as long as Allah wishes it to be, and when He wishes, He will withdraw it. Then you will have tyrannical rulers for as long as Allah wishes, and when He wishes, He will withdraw them. Then you will have rulers imposed and maintained by force for as long as Allah wishes it to be, and when He wishes, He will lift them from you."*

Indeed, the Prophet (ﷺ) spoke the truth, and we repeat his words: *"Then you will have a Caliphate that follows the example of the Prophet which will fill the earth."* [49]

[48] Bukhari and Muslim.
[49] Reported by Imam Ahmad.

Part Five: Our Path

1. Carrying out Da'wah.

2. Enjoining good and forbidding evil (Hisbah).

3. Waging Jihad in the way of Allah within the framework of a Jama 'ah whose actions are regulated by the True Shari 'ah, and which refuses compromises out of courtesy to the disbelievers and inclination towards them, and which draws lessons from past experiences.

We have mentioned in the chapter entitled `*Our Understanding'* that we understand Islam as the *Ulama of* our *Ummah* understood it. We also said that understanding Islam in its entirety is a vital prerequisite for practicing it entirely without any omissions, inventions or transgressions. A wrong understanding *of* Islam will certainly lead, in the course of action, to either a restricted movement, leaving aside part of Islam's commands, or a movement transcending Allah's limits and allowing free rein to whims and desires. Therefore, understanding Islam in its entirety is the sure guarantee against transgression of the limits and the neglect of parts of the Islamic fundamentals.

Now, in the context of discussing the way the Islamic movement should follow in order to deal with the world around it, we say that we will find along the way some people who agree with us in our `*Aqeedah,* our understanding of Islam and our objectives. To these we must extend our hands in co-operation, in order that we may all work together as one *Jama'ah.* At the same time, we will find other) people who lack the understanding of Islam through negligence or ignorance of some of its facts and laws. To such people we will spare to effort to offer *Da'wah.* We will also find some people who neglect good conduct and practise vice, in which case it is our duty to enjoin them "to do good and avoid evil". We will also face people who are too stubborn and arrogant to follow the truth and *Jihad* will be our means to deal with them.

People must belong to one of the above mentioned categories despite their various types and circumstances. This is why we have stated that our way is as follows:

1. Carrying out *Da'wah,*
2. Enjoining good and forbidding evil *(Hisbah),*
3. Waging *Jihad* in the way of Allah within the framework of a *Jama'ah* whose actions are regulated by the True *Shari'ah,* and which refuses compromises out of courtesy to the disbelievers and inclination towards them, and which draws lessons of past experiences.

Anyone who reflects on the ways and means laid down by Islam as formulae for dealing with reality, with all its demands, challenges and complexities, at any time and in any place, will find that hey are incorporated in the three practices: *Da'wah, Hisbah* and *Jihad.* Each of these three activities has its own regulations and rulings, its limits and domain, which we will discuss in more detail, later. In addition, we will also explain that, in order that our dealing with reality will yield fruit, it must be carried out within the framework of a *Jama’ah.* We will also demonstrate why

collective work which is regulated by *Shari 'ah* and conducted within a movement has become a necessity dictated by our religion and also by the reality with all its challenges and circumstances. A detailed discussion of the requirements, reasons and motivations that have necessitated the adoption of collective work will also be presented in due course.

But before we go any further it is perhaps important to outline some important issues that demand attention and consideration.

The first issue is that Islam, in its greatness and comprehensiveness, incorporates many different ways of dealing with the world around us. These ‘means of change’ start with a gentle *Da'wah* which employs kind exhortation and meets insult with good conduct up to that which reaches the stage of smiting with the sword. Between these two extremes are many levels which are all included under the three methods mentioned above, namely *Da'wah, Hisbah,* and *Jihad.* This flexibility is clear evidence of the practicality of Islam in dealing with people who hold different attitudes towards it, in closeness or distance, acceptance or rejection, submission or arrogance, peace or war. This is why it has different methods to deal with reality in order to assimilate all the attitudes held towards it whether by individuals, groups, sects or regimes. Thus Islam can succeed in changing any situation, whatever the circumstances, and cause it to conform to its regulations and surrender to its tenets.

Da'wah serves as an efficient tool of changing people's conceptions, by addressing their minds and hearts through reasoning and good counsel in the hope of dispelling the wrong convictions which are rooted in the hearts and minds of the people and changing them in order to bring the disbeliever out of the darkness of ignorance into the light of faith, the heretic from the darkness of heresy to the light of the Sunnah, and the sinner from the darkness of desires into the light of obedience.

Those who favorably respond to *Da'wah* are welcomed and appreciated. As for those who reject it, they vary in the degree of their rejection. Some tend to reject the truth on an individual basis, by abandoning commands and practicing prohibitions. This is the area of *Hisbah,* with its successive stages as an effective weapon which serves the purpose of bringing the sinner back to the right path, or at least restraining him and protecting the Muslim community against his evil.

There are also those who reject the way of Allah and refuse to give *Da'wah* a chance to reach the hearts of other people. They use their power and influence to prevent people from receiving it and force them to comply with their own laws, following the example of Pharaoh, who said (which means):

"O Chiefs! I know of no god for you other than myself." [50]

"I am your lord, the most high." [Surah An-Naazi'at (79), Ayah 24.]

The sword is the only weapon to deal with such people and *Jihad* serves as the only means of change in this regard. For *Da'wah* will not suffice to change the concepts guiding their actions and *Hisbah* will not be enough to restraint them and eradicate their evil. The only way left open with this category of people is to rally the troops and wield the sword:

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[50] Surah Al-Qasas (28), Ayah 38.

"Verily Allah loves those who fight in His cause arrayed in [solid] ranks, as though they are [strong] structure cemented with [molten] lead." [51]

We must never confuse the fields of *Da'wah*, *Hisbah* and *Jihad*. Each of these has its areas of action, rulings and circumstances which make one the only means to be used and not the others. It is a pity that many of those who work for Islam do not make a distinction between these areas. As a result of this, they employ harshness when the situation calls for kindness, or kindness when harshness is required. Some of them would engage in preaching on the Battlefield while others would wield the sword instead of practicing *Da'wah*. While doing this, they are either prompted by ignorance or motivated by personal desires. If they are prompted by ignorance, then this is a catastrophe; and if they are motivated by personal desires, this is a greater catastrophe.

The second issue concerns those who actively work for the Islamic movement. They should be well aware of their duty in this world, their *Da'wah* and the grave responsibility which they alone carry. They should prepare themselves to practise *Da'wah* with all its requirements, namely knowledge, wisdom, clear argument, shrewdness, intelligence and understanding of the human self, its whims, diseases and remedies. They should also prepare themselves to practise *Hisbah* with all its requirements, namely knowledge, patience, endurance, determination and courage to stand up for the truth. They must also prepare themselves to undertake *Jihad* and arm themselves with everything this course requires: strength, fortitude, courage, sacrifice, training, preparation and expertise.

The Islamic movement will surely fail to establish the religion of Allah on earth if it neglects to provide its members with this comprehensive education and contents itself with some aspects of Islam at the cost of others. To put it clearly, it is not enough that we become a group of preachers, good only at practicing *Da'wah*, forgetting, or trying to forget, that there are people who can be dissuaded from sin only by force, and regimes and sects which can only be swayed by the sword. At the same time, it is not enough that we should all turn into an army, taking up arms on every occasion and unable to practice *Da'wah* or undertake the religious education of the people, incapable of gentle persuasion, forgetting that with some people it suffices to merely caution or chide. It is utterly wrong to take up the sword where *Da'wah* and gentle persuasion is required and to undertake admonition and good counsel on the Battlefield. May Allah's peace and blessings be upon the Prophet who observed all these commands. Allah says (which means):

"O Prophet! Verily, We have sent you as a witness and a bearer of glad tidings; a warner and a summoner unto Allah by His command, and as a lamp that gives light." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayat 45-46.]

"He enjoins on them good and forbids them evil." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 157.]

"Fight, therefore, in the cause of Allah." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 84.]

"Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah a beautiful example to follow for him who hopes in [the Meeting with] Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah much." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 21.]

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[51] Surah As-Saff (61), Ayah 4.

The third, and last, issue which we want to stress here is that putting forward *Da'wah*, *Hisbah*, and *Jihad* as means to deal with reality with a view to changing it in accordance with Islamic instructions obviously means rejecting all the other means of which Allah does not approve. We reject all innovated means not introduced by Islam and not pleasing to Allah. We reject all 'means of change' introduced by *Jahiliyyah* through its institutions and systems and in accordance with its laws and principles. We renounce and disdain them and refuse to sully ourselves by participating in the profanity they: represent. We reject them because they are ignorant means. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, in the farewell sermon *(Hajjatul-Wadaa'): "Everything belonging to Jahiliyyah is placed under my feet."* [52]

How could we possibly take something from under the feet of the Prophet (ﷺ) and use it as our path and direction?

Devils from among Mankind and jinn will try to lure us into the adoption of these ignorant ways. They will attempt to persuade us that these ways serve the religion of Allah and will bring us victory and dominion on earth. May Allah curse Iblis, for it was he who made Adam's sin "seem fair unto him" and whispered evil to him until he caused him to be expelled from the Garden:

"Then Satan whispered to him, saying: `O Adam! Shall I lead you to the Tree of Eternity and to a kingdom that will never waste away?" [Surah Ta-Ha (20), Ayah 120.]

"O you children of Adam! Let not Satan deceive you, as he got your parents [Adam and Eve] out of the Garden." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 27.]

"And do not follow the footsteps of Satan. Verily, he is to you an open enemy." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2). Ayah 168.]

It is imperative, therefore, that we hold fast onto our religion with certainty that it is sufficient for us as guidance and that anything other than it, is but error and delusion.

Indeed, *Jahiliyyah* attempted in the past to persuade the Prophet (ﷺ) off the true path by offering him its own alternatives and ways. The heads of Qur'aish tried to tempt him with wealth to become the richest among them, with authority that they would decide nothing without him, and even with sovereignty and kingship. Some even proposed to him to worship their idols for one year in return for their worshipping Allah for one year. The offers continued,

"Verily, they were about to tempt you away from that which We have revealed to you to fabricate something other than it against Us, and then they would certainly have taken you a friend! And had We not made you stand firm, you would nearly have inclined to them a little. In that case, We would have made you taste a double portion [of punishment] in this life, and a double portion [of punishment] after death. And then you would have found none to help you against Us." [Surah Al-Israa' (17), Ayat 73-75.]

[52] Muslim.

"They wish that you should compromise [in religion out of courtesy] with them, so they [too] would compromise with you." [Surah Al-Qalam (68), Ayah 9.]

Allah, however, protected His Messenger (ﷺ) against treading the path of *Jahiliyyah.*

All those who assume responsibility of bearing the trust of this religion should know that it is a complete and perfect religion which can dispense with *Jahiliyyah* ways and means:

"This day, I have perfected your religion for you, completed My favour upon you, and have chosen for you Islam as your religion." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 3.]

Islam is complete in its creed, laws and rituals. It came with many things, including the outlining of the way its followers must tread in order to bring about its triumph and dominion. It also outlined the means which its followers should utilize with regard to all the different types of people around them.

In its treatment of the various cases, Islam adopts distinctive means and methods which are in line with its aims and objectives. Therefore, we should by no means employ ignorant means and methods and then claim that we intend to bring victory to our religion and to attain our aims and objectives. As a matter of fact, in so doing we will only assist *Jahiliyyah* to reach its own goals, whether we like it or not. Besides, if we choose to tread the path of *Jahiliyyah,* our aims and objectives will certainly deviate from the path of Islam in order to meet or come closer to those of *Jahiliyyah,* whether we like it or not.

Indeed, the ways and means of Islam are by no means independent of its laws; they are not a new invention, nor are they a secondary issue, as it were, which could be disregarded or replaced while upholding the rest of the traits of our way of life. In fact, this is pure illusion. It is impossible to retain Islam if we choose to change its set of beliefs or practices. It is also impossible to think of the survival of Islam if we tend to change its own ways and means. In fact, Islam haughtily rejects the creeds and practices of *Jahiliyyah* and prohibits its followers from utilizing its ways and means; it also warns them against getting closer to them in any manner:

"And incline not towards those who do wrong, lest the Fire should touch you, and you shall have no protectors other than Allah, nor will you be helped." [Surah Hud (11), Ayah 113.]

Finally, this is not an appropriate place to make a comparison between Islam's modes of action and means of change together with those of other *Jahiliyyah* ideologies such as capitalism and communism. The dignity and glory of Islam prevents us from comparing our religion with doctrines of man's own creation. For how can man-made laws rise to a status closer to that of Islam to deserve being compared to, even in the minutes of details?

"Not alike are the blind and the seeing; nor are [alike] the darkness and the light; nor are [alike] the shade and the [sun's] heat." [Surah Faatir (35), Ayat 19-21.]

1. Da'wah

Allah's command came to the Prophet (ﷺ) to engage in *Da'wah:* ***"O you enveloped (in garments)! Arise and warn!"*** [Surah Al-Muddathir (74), Ayat 1-2.]

The Prophet (ﷺ) obeyed the command and began to call people to his Lord, secretly for three years until Allah (SWT) revealed the verse (which means) :

"Therefore proclaim openly that which you are commanded, and turn away from those who join false gods with Allah." [Surah Al-Hijr (15), Ayah 94.]

It was then that the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) ascended Mount As-Safaa and collected upon the clans of Qur'aish: *"I have come to you with a warning against a severe punishment."*[53] For the following twenty-three years, *Da'wah* became the preoccupation of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the pivot of his life until his death.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) called the people of Makkah, freemen and slaves, young and old, to the worship of Allah. He extended the *Da'wah* to visitors who came to Makkah on pilgrimage or for trade. He went to Taa'if to deliver *Da'wah* to the tribe of Thaqeef. Following the pledge of allegiance at al-'Aqabah, he sent Musa'b bin `Umair to Madeenah in order to call its people to the worship of Allah. Later, he himself emigrated to Madeenah and set up his mosque where he preached to the newly formed community ***"as a witness, a bearer of glad tidings, a warner, and as one who invites to Allah by His leave."***[54]. He frequented the assemblies of the Ansaar tribe, preaching and teaching. He sent his preachers throughout the Arabian Peninsula: Mu'adh bin Jabal went to Yemen to call upon the 'People of the Book' there to Islam; 'Urwah bin Mas'ood went to Thaqeef to call his own people to the new religion; `Alaa' bin al-Hadhramee was sent to Bahrain. Even the Prophet (ﷺ) himself stood by the gate of Ka'bah after the Conquest of f Makkah, calling the Makkans to Islam. On his return to Madeenah, tribal delegations flocked to him from all over Arabia (in a year that came to be known as the '*Year of Delegations'),* whereupon they responded to his call by embracing the new religion and returning to their homes to call upon their tribes and kin to follow in their footsteps.

With the entire land of Arabia now entered into the Islamic faith, the Prophet (ﷺ) now sent his emissaries with the message of Islam to the kings and emperors around the Arabian Peninsula:

"In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. From Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, to Heraclius, the Emperor of the Romans. Peace be upon him who follows the true guidance. To proceed, I extend to you the invitation to accept Islam. Embrace Islam and you will be safe. Accept Islam and Allah will give you a double reward. And if you turn away, upon you will be the sins of your subjects:

"Say: 'O People of the Book, come to the word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah, and we associate no partners with

[53] Bukhari and Muslim.

[54] Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayat 45-46.

Him, and that none of us take others as lords besides Allah.' Then, if they turn away, say: 'Bear witness that we are Muslims.' "[55]

And in the farewell pilgrimage *(Hajjatul-Wadaa'),* thousands upon thousands of Muslims stood listening to the call of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"Verily, everything related to Jahiliyyah is now under my feet..." and *"I have left you with something which, if you hold on to, You will never go astray: the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger."* [56]

During his last illness which led to his demise, the Prophet (ﷺ) entered the mosque with his head bandaged, and sat on his mimbar and said, *"...By Allah, I have no fear that you might revert to polytheism after my death. What I fear for you is the life of this world and your rivalry therein."*[57]

On the twelfth of Rabi' al-Awwal, in the eleventh year of Hijrah, when the Muslims were praying in the mosque, being led by Abu-Bakr, the Prophet (ﷺ) raised the curtain in 'Aisha's apartment and took a final look at his Ummah satisfied and pleased with the fruit of his *Da'wah*. Then he returned to his deathbed to meet his Lord.

Our Prophet (ﷺ) passed away after he had conveyed the message, fulfilled the trust and counselled the *Ummah*. We stand witness to this, as have countless millions of people before us, and as more countless millions will after us. What remains for us to do is to safeguard the trust handed down to us through generations of the Muslim *Ummah*. We are duty-bound to live as the Prophet (ﷺ) lived, and carry on with calling people unto Allah for as long as we are on this earth. All our going and coming, morning and evening, speech and action must be directed towards the fulfillment of *Da'wah.* Following the example of the Prophet (ﷺ), harassment, persecution and hostilities should not deter us from calling people to the religion of Allah.

To actively discharge the obligation of *Da'wah is* a great honour and excellent station:

"Who is better in speech than one who calls [men] to Allah, works righteousness, and says: 'I am one of the Muslims?' "[Surah Fussilaat (41), Ayah 33.]

It suffices us that by doing so we follow in the footsteps of the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) who said,

"May Allah bless a man who hears my sayings and commits them to memory, then faithfully communicates them (to others)." [58]

and

"By Allah, if Allah guides a man [to Islam] through you, it is much better for you than being blessed with the best pleasures of this world." [Bukhari.]

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[55] Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 64. The Hadeeth is from Bukhari and Muslim.
[56] Ahmad, Tirmidhi and An-Nasaa'ee.
[57] Bukhari and Muslim.
[58] Bukhari.

And may Allah have mercy upon 'Umar bin Al-Khattab who said, *"Praise be to Allah who blessed the people by giving, after a break in the series of Messengers, a remnant of the people of knowledge (Ahlul'Ilm) who call those who have gone astray to the Guidance [of Islam], endure the harm they inflict upon them, and who show the Book of Allah to those who have become blind [in their hearts]. How many victims of Iblis have they rescued and how many misguided have they guided! They sacrificed their blood and their wealth to prevent the destruction of the slaves (of Allah). How great is their good impression upon people! So, do not fail to follow in their footsteps, for they are in a lofty standing."*

To shun this obligation is in fact to renounce Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) and to reject of those whom *they* have guided [to the truth]. They have sacrificed their blood and money in the duty that has been placed upon our shoulders. The *Ulama* of our *Ummah,* past and present. have made it clear that *Da'wah is Fard Kifaayah,* when it is undertaken by those who fulfil its purpose relating to statements, preaching, excuses, warnings, and refuting doubts with proof; and if not then everyone capable of undertaking it is sinful. The obligation of *Da'wah* has become more critical today than ever before. The need for it increases with the increase of the destructive, false creeds which make every effort to turn people away from their religion and their Lord.

The *Jahiliyyah* around us has succeeded in preparing and formulating its principles, theories, ideologies, rites, slogans, ideal values and cultures. It has also succeeded in exercising its control on practically all countries of the world. It has also managed to subject our Islamic countries and made them "move in orbit around it", propagating its ideologies and lifestyles, imbibing its customs and traditions, and contenting themselves with its values and ideals. It has successfully turned them into trumpeters, calling to its falsehood. And wherever you go this call follows you: at home, at school, on the street, at work, in the parliament, in court-rooms, on the newspaper pages and in the broadcasting stations. It is an explicit and wicked call to *Jahiliyyah* which has succeeded in tearing people from their *Fitrah* (pure nature) and hurling them into the darkness of disbelief, hypocrisy, heresy and wrongdoing. Only those very few blessed with Allah's mercy have been spared this terrible fate.

It has now become vital for the Islamic *Da'wah to* play its role, namely to confront all this decay, stop people from falling any lower into the darkness of *Jahiliyyah,* retrieve all the masses that have fallen victims to false ideologies and introduce them to Islam, which *is* ***"a right religion, the religion of Abraham, the upright who was not of the Mushrikoon (those who worshipped others with Allah)."*** [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 162.]

It remains the role of the Islamic *Da'wah* to expose the falsehood of all these fake calls that reverberate all around us day and night. It must expose them and show the people that all these false calls are like scum upon the banks which in no time passes away, and give them instead the good which remains in the earth: ***"As for the foam it passes away as scum upon the banks, while that which is for the good of Mankind remains in the earth."*** [Surah Ar-Ra'd (13), Ayah 17.]

It is the duty of the Islamic *Da'wah* to give Mankind this religion in its complete form, starting from the attestation that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah, all the way to removing the harmful things from the road.

It is its duty to teach the ignorant so that they may understand, to alert the negligent so that they may wake up, to advise the proud so that they may submit to the will of Allah, to lead the disbeliever to faith, the polytheist to monotheism, the heretic to the Sunnah, and the disobedient to obedience. It must establish evidence against those who reject the Truth ***"in order to be free from guilt before your Lord [Allah], and perhaps they may fear Allah."*** [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 164.]

It remains the duty of the Islamic *Da'wah* to stand in the face of this sweeping tide of false *calls* that are destructive to every truth and leading to every falsehood. Who else can assume this responsibility? Who will call upon a billion Christians and Jews to believe in Allah alone? Who is going to call two billion idolaters and atheists to believe in Allah? Who is going to bring a billion Muslims back to their Lord and Religion? Who is going to assist the youth of today who have immersed themselves in disobedience and dedicated themselves to the satisfaction of their own desires, in negligence of their religion? Who is going to extend a helping hand to the aged who are at death's door and have not yet repented? Who is going to challenge the false, wicked designs surrounding our religion today like shackles surrounding a prisoner's wrists?

There is no doubt that this is our duty, which is surely too great to be carried out by scattered and individual efforts. Furthermore, if this obligation is not discharged, all those capable of undertaking it have sinned even for their failure to communicate a single Qur'anic verse.

Falsehood has had no shame or hesitation in propagating its claims and advertising its beliefs. On the contrary, it has done so with arrogance and pride, and has gone so far as looking down with disdain upon us Muslims and preachers of Islam. It expects us, the callers to Truth, to be ashamed of our *Da’wah* and of spreading it amongst the people. It wants us to hide our *Da’wah* in our chests and walk timidly in the midst of the creation because we are Muslims. This is how falsehood wishes to change criteria and standards.

But we stand firm in our refusal to accept this reversal of roles and succumb to this twisted logic. It is we who are on the side of Truth. We are the ones who shout our call at the top of our voices. We stand high to be seen by those who know us and those who do not, saying: "Here we are, the carriers of the true *Da'wah;* and this is the faith we offer all Mankind." We will achieve our calling by the honor and glory of Islam and the gentleness and mercy of its preachers. Islam, as an ideology and a way of life, is greater than any falsehood. Islam is merciful towards people, even the disobedient among them; we take them by the hand and help them through their difficulties.

There is no contradiction whatsoever between the might of Islam above all other creeds and ideologies, and its gentleness towards those we call upon to reject all these falsehoods and enter into the fold of the faithful. The might of Islam prevents weakness and defeatism from setting foot in our hearts. It puts us in the position of the triumphant over falsehood, in obedience to Allah's command:

"So lose not heart, nor fall into despair: for you must gain mastery if you are true in faith." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 139.]

The might of Islam compels us to put forth our *Da’wah:* clearly, forcefully and honestly, in its pure form in the face of falsehood in order to smother and obliterate it. The might and dignity of Islam makes our *Da’wah* dearer to people's hearts and

obliges us to hold fast to it, to be proud of it, never to neglect a single aspect of it or be ashamed of openly proclaiming it among the people.

The might and dignity of Islam prevents us from inclining towards falsehood. It makes us haughtily reject mixing the Truth we have, with the falsehood of *Jahiliyyah* as this might puts us among those ***"who preach the Message of Allah, and fear Him, and fear none but Allah."*** [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 39.]

This might is unfortunately lacking among many of Islam's preachers today. They lost it when they were defeated by the calls of falsehood which made them feel ashamed of the Truth they have. This loss has resulted in the watering down of their call, to such an extent that it now pleads with falsehood and even seeks its pleasure and acceptance, begging falsehood thus: <u>"Please sir, allow me to coexist with you, I have nothing within me that may worry you. I am just like you, calling people to goodness, knowledge, justice, equality, freedom and fraternity."</u>

It is a pity to see those concerned with *Da'wah* work striving hard in their effort to prove that Islam conforms to the `progressivism' of falsehood and with its whims and desires. It pains us to see the faith of Allah being torn to shreds by these people, each picking out a slice to reconstruct and reformulate it in such a way as to please the callers to *kufr, shirk,* and disobedience.

It hurts us to see Islam turned by these people into a vehicle for rulers and sovereigns, or into a servant in their palaces, laying down the foundations of socialism or helping to defend capitalism. It is a pity to see today's callers to Islam turning a blind eye, despite their knowledge of the Truth, in order to please people's desires and satisfy their own whims.

We call upon these preachers to wake up to the fact, that in this day and age, Mankind, its societies and its rulers and all their ideals are the result of false calls and ignorant theories which have relentlessly been spreading poison in the body of the *Ummah* over many centuries, thus reducing us to the present sorry state of affairs. Our duty is not to make concessions with falsehood, but rather to use the Truth in order to destroy and obliterate falsehood:

"As for the foam, it passes away as scum upon the banks, while that which is for the good of Mankind remains in the earth." [Surah Ar-Ra'd (13), Ayah 17.]

Our duty is to put forward our religion and *Da'wah* with clarity determination, in its universality and realism. We are to present it to the people so that they can compare it with their false ideologies, compare between light and darkness, the blind and the seeing, the living and the dead. It is our mission to shake people so violently with our call and admonish them thus (which means):

"Answer the call to your Lord." [Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 47.]

"Hasten then [at once] to Allah." [Az-Zariyat (51), Ayah 50.]

Our duty is to bring people to the worship of Allah and away from the worship of their whims and desires. It is not our objective to bridge the gap between the truth of our religion and the falsehood around us. For this is a blatant betrayal of Allah and His religion. The fact that the majority of peoples and societies are distant from Islam, and that all their principles, theories and ideologies are opposed to our

religion, should be no excuse for us to reach a compromise with falsehood. On the contrary, it motivates us to become clearer and more open with the people:

"Let him who will, believe, and let him who will reject (it)." [Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 29.]

"That those who perish might perish after the Clear Sign [had been given], and those who lived might live after a Clear Sign [had been given]." [Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 42.]

Indeed, our enemies realized a long time ago that it is impossible to eradicate Islam completely. So they resorted to trying to alter and deform it so that it would serve their falsehood, and that its followers would join their ranks.

These enemies also direct their attention to *Da'wah,* in the hope of turning it into a tool with which to shape a generation of Muslims who understand Islam in a twisted manner suited to their malevolent aims. They seek to produce a generation that will not confront or oppose them in any way. It has thus become a great sin for any Muslim to join hands with them or assist them in anyway to execute their treacherous schemes. More sinful yet are those concerned with *Da'wah* work who allow Islam to incorporate part of their beliefs. Equally sinful are those who mix the Truth with falsehood, in order that their enemies would give them the green light at the expense of their religion:

"Verily, they were about to tempt you away from that which We have revealed unto you, to fabricate something other than it against Us, and then they would certainly have taken you as a friend! And had We not made you stand firm, you would nearly have inclined to them a little. In that case, We would have made you taste a double portion [of punishment] in this life and a double portion [of punishment] after death. And then you would have found none to help you against Us. And verily, they were about to frighten you so much as to drive you out front the land. But in that case they would not have stayed [therein] after you, except for a little while. [This was Our] rule of way with the Messengers We sent before you, and you will find no change in Our ways." [Surah Al-Israa' (17). Ayat 73-77.]

Sacrifice is therefore required here. Callers to Islam should sacrifice their lives; otherwise they will sell their religion to please their enemies. Trials and tribulations represent a sure outcome. If callers to Islam do not accept them in their lives, in the form of killing and torture, they will certainly have them in their religion by forsaking Islam altogether. So it is up to them to choose.

Da'wah, as a means of guidance, will remain an open door which *Jahiliyyah will* never manage to close. Over many centuries, and in spite of countless attempts, it has failed to halt *Da'wah,* even at times when its opposition was most fierce and the followers of Islam were at their weakest. Any Muslim concerned with *Da'wah* must bear in mind that he has to make sacrifices and pay the price of using the way leading to Allah, as did the Prophets, Messengers and servants of Allah, who conveyed His message before him. He must, in one way or another, sacrifice his blood and wealth to save his religion.

We must pay the price, no matter how dear it may be, to maintain *Da'wah* as a force to rebuild our *Ummah* and as a tool to demolish the structure of *Jahiliyyah.* It is imperative to uphold the obligation of *Da'wah* as a means of refuting the proofs of

our enemies and shattering their delusions; a means of taking their children away from them everyday, bringing them out of darkness into light, from the camp of *Jahiliyyah* into that of Islam, so that they will be added strength to the Islamic cause, following in the footsteps of `Umar bin Al-Khattab, Khalid bin Waleed, `Amr bin al-`Aas, and Ibn Abee Jahl.

At the end of our discussion of *Da'wah* we would like to say that those who stand up and call people to the religion of Allah (SWT) are in fact following in the steps of the Prophet (ﷺ) who spent twenty-three years calling people to Islam. Allah (SWT) had refined His Messenger (ﷺ) in the most excellent way before permitting him to carry the trust of this religion and communicate His message. Today, as we take on the responsibility of *Da'wah* to Allah, we are also bound by the attendant obligations and requirements of *Da'wah,* namely the adoption of the good character of the Prophet (ﷺ). The books of Hadeeth and *Seerah* have detailed his good character which Allah (SWT) describes in the Qur'an thus (which means):

"And you [stand] on an exalted standard of character." [Surah Al-Qalam (68), Ayah 4.]

The greatness of the Prophet's (ﷺ) character was revealed to us in his relationships and dealings over the twenty-three years, which represent the age of the Prophet's mission.

Some Muslims have entered the field of *Da'wah* without adopting the required necessary good character of those calling to Islam. This has led to the futility of their efforts and the turning away of people in detestation of them and of the faith to which they call, as a result of the discrepancy between their words and deeds.

All those calling to Islam must, therefore, follow the example of the Prophet (ﷺ) in all his manners. In the smallest and greatest details of his sincerity and devotion to Allah. In his mercy and kindness towards the people to whom he preached. In his forgiveness and forgoing of revenge for himself. In his asceticism and piety. In his avoidance of anything where there was doubt as to its goodness or evil. In his courage in upholding the Truth. In his modesty, patience and generosity. In his gentleness and tenderness. In his determination to carry out his *Da'wah* and never yielding to despair.

"Now has come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that you should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the believers is he most kind and merciful." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 128.]

2. Hisbah (Enjoining Good and Forbidding Evil)

Allah (SWT) said (which means):

"The hypocrites, men and women, are from one another: they enjoin evil and forbid good." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 67.]

"The believers, men and women, are awliyyaa' (helper supporters, friends, protectors) of one another: they enjoin good at forbid evil." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 71.]

In these verses, Allah (SWT) has made the enjoining of good and forbidding of evil a characteristic with which to differentiate between the believers and the hypocrites. He makes it clear that forbidding evil and enjoining good is a trait specific to the believers. Indeed, it is with this trait that Allah (SWT) sent His Messengers and revealed His Books. It is a characteristic of our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) which the Qur'an mentions thus:

"He enjoins good upon them and forbids them from evil." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 157.]

It is also a characteristic of this *Ummah* and a precondition for its virtue and success:

"You are the best of peoples ever raised for Mankind; you enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong, and you believe in Allah." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 110.]

Mujahid said, *"Being the best of all peoples is conditional on the characteristics mentioned in the verse."* Al-Qurtubee said, "You *are the best of peoples only if you enjoin good and forbid evil."* Therefore, this compliment of our *Ummah* depends on whether we enjoy these two characteristics. If we do not, we will no longer be worthy of this praise. Indeed, we will deserve chastisement and be doomed to destruction.

Imam an-Nawawee said, "You *should know that this issue, the enjoining good and forbidding evil, has mostly been neglected over a long period of time. What remains of us today are but a few traces, all despite the fact that it is an important issue which lies at the heart of all affairs."* Therefore, those who seek success in the Hereafter and aspire to Allah's Pleasure must take into account this issue due to its great benefit, especially since it has mostly been abandoned. He must also make his intention sincere and fear no-one who may oppose his attempt. For Allah (SWT) says (which means):

"Verily Allah helps one who helps His [Cause]." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 40.]

The reasons for enjoining good and forbidding evil are many and varied. Hope for reward and fear of punishment for neglecting it; anger over the transgression of Allah's limits; the desire to give counsel to the believers and compassion for them in the hope of saving them from the consequences of disobeying Allah's commandments; and love for and glorification of Allah (SWT), for He surely is worthy of obedience, remembrance and gratefulness. Wealth and life are nothing in return for the protection of the sacred sanctity of Allah. As one of as-Salaf-us-Salih said, *"I wish all the creation would obey Allah in return for my flesh being cut off with scissors."* Whoever perceives this will find all hardships for Allah's sake easy, as `Abdul-Malik, the son of `Umar bin `Abdul-Aziz said to his father, *"I wish pots of hot water would be boiled for my torture in the cause of Allah."*

Hisbah has been defined by scholars as *"the enjoining of a good that has been evidently abandoned and the forbidding of an evil that is openly practiced."* Imam an-Nawawee said, *"The Qur'an, the Sunnah and the consensus of the Ummah are in accord that enjoining good and forbidding evil is an [Islamic] obligation."*

The command to conduct *Hisbah* in the Qur'an and Sunnah sometimes comes in a more direct way, as Allah (SWT) says (which means), ***"Let there arise out of you***

a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right, and forbidding what is wrong." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 104.]

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, *"Whosoever sees an evil [being practised] must change it with his hand. If he cannot do so, then with his tongue. If he [still] cannot do so, then with his heart, which is the weakest form of faith."* [59]

On other occasions, *Hisbah is* strongly recommended as an inherent characteristic of the believers, as Allah says (which means),

"And the believers, men and women, are awliyyaa' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another: they enjoin good and forbid evil; they establish Salah, they pay Zakah, and they obey Allah and His Messenger. As for these, Allah will have mercy on them. Verily, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 71.]

And still on other occasions it comes in the form of criticising those who neglect it and as a threat of curse and doom. As Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David and of Jesus, the son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed [Allah and His Messenger] and were ever transgressing beyond bounds. They used not to forbid one another from the Munkar (wrong, evil-doing, sins, polytheism, disbelief, etc.) which they committed. Vile indeed was what they used to do." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayat 78-79.]

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, *"There are no people in whose midst acts of disobedience are habitual, and who can change these habits but do not change them, except that Allah visits them with a sweeping punishment."* [60]

Abu-Dardaa' said, *"Either you enjoin good and forbid evil or Allah will set up over you a tyrant ruler who will neither respect your elderly nor have mercy on your young. If the pious amongst you pray for their destruction, their prayers will not be answered. If you ask Allah for help, He will not grant it to you. And if you ask His forgiveness, He will not forgive you."*

Bilal bin Sa'eed said, *"If an act of disobedience is kept secret, it will harm only its doer, but if it is committed openly and not changed, it will harm everyone."*

An-Nawawee *said, "Hisbah is a great issue which lies at the heart of all matters. If evil practices become abound, Allah's punishment will be visited upon the pious and the wicked alike. And if they fail to forbid the transgressors to do evil, Allah will make His punishment spread to encompass all the people:"*

"Let those who oppose the Messenger's commandment (Sunnah, legal ways, orders, acts of worship, and so on) beware, lest some trial befall them or a grievous torment be inflicted on them." [Surah An-Nur (24), Ayah 63.]

Abu Bakr as-Siddeeq said, *"O people! You recite the verse (which means),*
'0 you who believe! Guard your own souls: if you follow (right) guidance, no hurt can come to you from those who stray." [61] *but you misinterpret it and do*

[59] Bukhari and Muslim.
[60] Abu Dawud, Ahmad and Ibn Maajah.

not know what it means. I once heard Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) say, `If people see someone practising injustice and do not set him right, Allah will almost certainly visit them all with severe punishment.'" Another narration goes, *"If they see evil practised and do not attempt to change it..."* [62]

An-Nawawee said, *"The Prophet's (ﷺ) saying 'must change it' indicates that practicing it is an obligation, by the consensus of the Ummah."* He also said, *"Enjoining good and forbidding evil is an obligation of collective responsibility (Fard Kifaayah). Once it is undertaken by a number of people the rest are absolved of it. However, if neglected by everyone, then all those who are capable of discharging it, without legal excuse or fear, are considered sinful. Furthermore, it becomes an obligation of individual responsibility for a person who is in a position to be the only one to know of the evil in question, or the only one who can effectively change it."*

Discussing the issue of enjoining good and forbidding evil, Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"It is of collective responsibility, and becomes of individual responsibility (Fard 'Ain) incumbent upon every able person if no-one else exercises it."* He also said, *"The test of responsibility for this obligation is ability. Every Muslim is obliged to a degree proportional to his ability. Allah (SWT) says (which means),* ***`So fear Allah as much as you can.'****"* [Surah At-Taghaabun (64), Ayah 16.]

Hisbah has four components: ***Al-Muhtasib*** (the person who practices *Hisbah),* ***Al-Muhtasabu 'alayhi*** (the person to whom *Hisbah is* directed), ***Al-Muhtasabu Feehi*** (the subject of *Hisbah)* and ***Ihtisab*** (the actual act of enjoining good and forbidding evil).

1. Al-Muhtasib: This refers to the person who enjoins good and forbids evil, whether he is permitted to do so by the Imam in charge of Muslims' affairs or not.

The Muhtasib must meet three conditions: he must be (a) Muslim, (b) *mukallaf* and (c) *qadir.*

The first condition excludes the disbeliever. By *mukallaf is* meant mature and sane, thus excluding the insane and the young. Exceptionally, young boys are allowed to practice it but are not obliged to so. By *qadir* is meant the ability to practice *Hisbah.* Ability to observe *Hisbah is* a required condition as those who are unable to practice it are not obliged to discharge it except in their hearts. Ibn Rajab said, *"To disapprove of evil with the heart is an act which must be done, for the failure of a believer's heart to condemn evil indicates that faith no longer resides in it. As for expressing disapproval with the tongue and the hand, this is only obligatory within one's capacity."* Practicing *Hisbah* does not become an obligation for the able due to fear of unbearable harm as a result of enjoining good and forbidding evil. If, however, one knows that one will be able to withstand and endure this harm, then one is obliged to discharge the duty of *Hisbah.* The Prophet (ﷺ) said in this respect, *"The best of all martyrs is Hamzah, and a man who stood up in the face of an oppressive ruler to enjoin and forbid him and was killed by him."* [63]

On the other hand, the obligation to practice *Hisbah* does not cease to be effective because of the fear of endurable adversity and minor harm, such as verbal

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[61] Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 105.
[62] Abu Dawud, Ahmad, and Tirmidhi.
[63] Al-Hakim; Sheikh Al-Albani classifies it as Sahih.

abuse and revilement. In this case the Muhtasib must prepare himself to face such reactions, as Luqman said to his son while exhorting him (which means),

"O my dear son! Observe Salah and enjoin good and forbid evil, and endure patiently whatever befalls you. Surely, this is of those matters [which require] firm resolve." [Surah Luqman (31), Ayah 17.]

In the case when ability is present and fear of harm is lacking, but it is thought that *Hisbah* will have no effect, it is most likely that *Hisbah* remains obligatory. An-Nawawee said, *"The duty of the Muhtasib is to enjoin and forbid, not (to attain the people's) acceptance."* He went on to say, *"The Ulama said: 'The obligation to enjoin good and forbid evil is not lifted if the person responsible for discharging it thinks that it will be of no effect. It must still be carried out.'"*

"And remind (by preaching the Qur'an); for verily, reminding benefits the believers." [Surah Az-Zariyat (51), Ayah 55.]

Ibn Al-Qayyim said of those in authority, *"They are more obliged than anyone else, for obligation is conditional upon ability; and it is binding on the able what is not on the unable."* Allah (SWT) said (which means), ***"So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can."***[64] The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"If I instruct you to do something, then do as much of it as you can."* [65]

All this is admissible as long as there is a Muslim Imam (leader) who entrusts the responsibility of *Hisbah* to those fit to carry it out. In this day and age, however, our rulers who have apostatized by changing the laws of *Shari'ah* have no right to delegate the responsibility for *Hisbah.* Indeed, they should be removed in accordance with the consensus of the *Ulama.* Al-Juwainee said, *"The endeavor of certain groups of people to cleanse society of those who spread corruption in the land in the absence of a Muslim Imam is considered to be one of the most important aspects of enjoining good and forbidding evil."*

The moral rules that the Muhtasib must observe are many including sincerity; knowledge of the rules governing the practice of *Hisbah*[66]*;* patience and endurance; gentleness; adhesion to the virtues one enjoins and avoidance of the vices one forbids. The latter quality, though not a precondition for the practicing of *Hisbah, is* a conduit to greater effectiveness and success.

2. Al-Muhtasabu 'alayhi: This refers to any person who does anything concerning which *Hisbah* could or should be observed. It is not a condition that such a person be *mukallaf* (that is, legally capable, sane in mind, *compos mentis).*

3. Al-Muhtasabu Feehi: This refers to any evil, known as such by consensus, which is presently committed, and evident to the Muhtasib without spying.

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[64] Surah At-Taghaabun (64), Ayah 16.

[65] Bukhari and Muslim.

[66] This defers subject to the thing in question. If it is of the well-known obligations or prohibitions like prayer, fasting during the month of Ramadhan, adultery, and alcohol, then all Muslims are aware of them; if, however, this concerns the minutest of sayings and deeds or matters relating to Ijtihaad, then it is not for the general public to enter into them nor forbid them, rather only the scholars should address them. (an-Nawawee).

The Arabic word *munkar,* translated here as 'evil', is more general than an act of disobedience[67], and it does not have to be great or small to be called as such. By saying 'by consensus' in the aforementioned definition, we mean to exclude anything that is the subject of reasonable and acceptable disagreement among the *Ulama.* The false or odd disagreement, however, remains invalid. By 'presently committed' we aim to exclude the warning of and/or punishment of someone for a vice which is no longer being committed, for this is no business of man. This also excludes anticipated vices, where only advice is permissible. Saying 'evident to the Muhtasib without spying' is in keeping with Allah's instructions (which mean): ***"spy not on each other."*** [Surah Al-Hujuraat (49), Ayah 12.]

4. Al-Ihtisab: This is the actual act of enjoining good and forbidding evil.

We have said earlier that disapproving of evil with the heart is a duty for ever Muslim, whether he is physically capable or not, and must never be neglected under any circumstances whatsoever, as this would indicate the disappearance *of* all traces *of Iman* from the heart. For the Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"There is no single trace of faith beyond this (changing evil with one's heart)."* [68] It remains to be added here that disapproving of evil with the heart requires that the Muslim should be absent from the scene where the vice is committed, as long as he is physically unable to change the vice in question. It has been said in this regard, *"Whoever cannot change evil should avoid the scene of its commission."*

The stages of changing evil, when ability is present, are in the following order:

a. Notification: The perpetrator *of* the vice might not know that what he is doing is a vice. Accordingly he must be gently notified *of* this vice in a courteous manner. If this has no effect, then the second stage is applicable.

b. Counsel: The person who commits a vice must be reminded of Allah; frightened with His punishment and His painful retribution, and encouraged to seek His reward. Gentleness and tenderness should be observed in both this stage and the one before it. Ash-Shafi'ee said, *"He who gives counsel to his brother in confidence has done him good; but he who does so in public has in fact defamed and exposed him."*

c. Reprehension and admonition with harsh words, but on condition that only permissible words are used. It is also a condition that only a necessary amount of admonition is employed and that it is not unnecessarily excessive.

d. Changing with the hands, such as breaking a musical instrument or spilling alcoholic drinks. This is only permissible when it is not possible to bring the person committing the vice to do this himself. Furthermore, the damage should be strictly limited only to the object with which the vice in question is being committed.

e. Threatening and warning: the person who commits the vice must not be threatened with anything other than a permissible punishment. This stage should come before the one that follows, namely.

f. Proceeding to the use of physical violence, such as employing the hand or the foot: It is crucial here to restrict physical violence to that necessary to stop the vice, with no excess. If this leads to the summoning of support and the taking up of arms against each other, then we must move to the next and final stage.

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[67] The little boy, for example, will not be judged on the Day of Judgement for drinking alcohol, but this act is still considered evil and should be disapproved of and criticised.

[68] Bukhari and Muslim.

g. Some jurists *(fuqahaa)* have said that this is permissible for ordinary members of the community. Al-Ghazali deems this to be the most correct opinion. Others, however, have maintained that such actions require specific authorization from the Khaleefah or Muslim ruler.

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All Muslim jurists agree that if the changing of evil, by any of the above stages, would result in a greater vice being committed, or the missing of a greater virtue, then the action must not be attempted. Those who attempt to change the vice in these circumstances, knowing what the implications might be, in fact commit a sin by doing so.

In the case when an individual or a group of people combine both evil and good, in such a way that the two are inseparable (they can either commit them both or leave them both), one must be weighed against the other. If the good is greater, then it must be enjoined even if this good entails an evil of a lesser degree. Forbidding this evil is deemed prohibited, for by forbidding it, a good of a greater degree will be lost. The opposite is also true.

If, however, both the good and the evil are equal, neither enjoining nor forbidding is permissible. Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"In some circumstances, enjoining good is required; in others, forbidding evil is required; and in others, neither enjoining good nor forbidding evil is required. This applies when good and evil are concomitant in certain actions. Legally speaking, enjoining good and forbidding evil are absolute injunctions, in such a manner that enjoining good does not cause the loss of some good of a greater degree or the occurrence of a greater evil; and the forbidding of evil does not cause a greater evil to happen or lead to the loss of some good of a greater degree."*

It must be remembered here that the criterion for deciding good and evil should be that of *Shari'ah* and not desires or personal opinions. The rule is that this task must be carried out by a person with a balanced intellect and mild temperament. Opinions expressed out of recklessness and cowardice are not considered.

Hisbah is an important facet of virtue and goodness, for its benefits transcend individuals to affect all fellow Muslims. Many disobedient people are restrained by good counsel and admonition. Many of those who neglect acts of obedience could be prompted to practice them by a word of encouragement or an enticement. Therefore, many major sins could be prevented by the hand or the tongue. Muslims should not neglect such an important obligation such as *Hisbah* despite the difficulty or harm it may entail. No-one should turn to the mass of Muslims, who have virtually abandoned this obligation and take them as an example or an excuse for not discharging this duty,

"Were you to follow the common run of those on earth, they would have led you away from the Way of Allah." [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 116.]

Instead we should follow in the footsteps of our meritorious predecessors. We should go forth where they have made advances and hold back where they have exercised restraint. We must shun these people who follow their whims and fancies: those who have put *Shari'ah* out of action have produced false proofs and invented lies against Allah's religion to support their claims. We must also shun all who have

put their own intellect before the *Shari'ah,* enduring patiently and acting upon Luqman's advice to his son (which means),

"O my dear son! Observe Salah, enjoin good and forbid evil, and endure patiently whatever befalls you. Surely, this is of those matters [which require firm resolve." [Surah Luqman (31), Ayah 17.]

A true Muslim should not be deterred by the multitude of vices and sins which pervade societies all around him, for they are like ***"an evil tree which is uprooted from above the earth and has no stability."***[69] Nor should this profusion of sins push him to despair of the merits and advantages of practicing *Hisbah;* otherwise, he would commit a sin by neglecting his obligation due to ill-founded excuses. His enjoining of good and forbidding of evil would not only bring about change but would also prevent the wrong values from setting root in people's hearts and minds and also prevent the altering of the facts and right standards. Abandoning *Hisbah will* sooner or later lead to the changing of society's system of values, in such a way that good would be regarded as evil and evil as good.

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Before concluding our discussion of *Hisbah,* we would like to refute some ill-founded opinions. Some people claim that integrity (*`adalah), is* a precondition for anyone wanting to practice *Hisbah* (the *Muhtasib).*

It is true that integrity is a desirable characteristic of a Muhtasib, but it is far from correct to regard it as a necessary precondition. Al-Qurtubee said, *"It is not a condition for someone who forbids evil to be upright, according to the opinion of Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah."* For while integrity is a characteristic of only a few people, enjoining good and forbidding evil is an injunction on all Muslims. If someone were to say what Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"Do you enjoin right conduct [on the people] and forget [to practice it] yourselves."[70] and, ***"Most hateful is it in the sight of Allah that you say what you do not do."***[71] Our reply to this is that rebuke is for doing what is forbidden, not for forbidding someone else from doing it. This is further explained by An-Nawawee who said, *"[A Muslim] should do two things: enjoin and forbid himself on the one hand, and enjoin and forbid others on the other. If he neglects the one, how could he possibly be allowed to neglect the other?"* Abu Hamid al-Ghazali also *said, "The fact of the matter is that even the wrong-doer must practise Hisbah."*

Some other people claim that the practice *of Hisbah* is permitted only for those designated and authorized by the *Imam* (ruler) to discharge it. In fact, this pre-condition is erroneous and unfounded for all the Qur'anic verses and Ahadeeth of the Prophet (ﷺ) that instructs us to discharge this duty are absolute and not restricted by this pre-condition. Our predecessors habitually practiced *Hisbah* without asking permission from the ruler. They even practised it against the ruler themselves when they did not act according to the teachings of the *Shari'ah*. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"One of the best forms of Jihad is to speak a word of truth in the face of an unjust ruler."*[72]

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[69] Surah Ibrahim (14), Ayah 26.
[70] Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 44.
[71] Surah As-Saff (61), Ayah 3.
[72] Ahmad and Ibn Maajah.

This Hadeeth, therefore, clearly states that individual's are allowed to forbid the rulers from doing evil. No-one with common sense can claim that the ruler's permission is needed in order to forbid him. An-Nawawee said, *"The Ulama have said that enjoining good and forbidding evil is not specifically the duty of the ruler. Individual Muslims are also allowed to practise it." Imam ul-Haramain said, "The evidence for this is to be found in the ijmaa' (consensus) of the Muslims. Individuals other than those in authority in the first and second generations of the Muslims used to enjoin good and forbid evil. The majority of Muslims approved their actions and did not rebuke them for preoccupying themselves with discharging this obligation without vested authorization, and Allah knows best."*

An-Nawawee also said, *"Imam ul-Haramain said, `Individual Muslims are permitted to stand in the face of those who commit major sins.'"*

If someone asks, "As Hisbah is a kind of authority, who will delegate it to individual Muslims?" The answer is that the authority of a Muhtasib is derived from Allah's absolute and unconditional command that it must be practiced by everyone. However, it may be said that the *Hisbah* practiced by a Muhtasib who is delegated and authorized by the ruler is wider and more complete, because this authorized Muhtasib is not only addressed like others by Allah and His Messenger to carry out this duty but also because he has his Hisbah delegated to him by the ruler of the Muslims. This opinion is acceptable, but does not in any way mean that this Muhtasib should prevent others from discharging the obligation of *Hisbah*. Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"Those in authority are more capable and more duty-bound than any others [to discharge this obligation], for ability is the pre-condition for this obligation, and every Muslim is obliged to carry it out within their capabilities. Allah (SWT) says (which means):* ***'So keep your duty to Allah and fear Him as much as you can.'***[73]"

One of the misconceptions that has been spread by some of those who work for Islam, let alone ordinary Muslims, and which has been regarded as an established fact which should not be objected, is that *Hisbah* is only permitted for the Islamic authority in its highest form, represented by the Caliphate and the Muslim *Jama'ah* in its endeavor to establish it in obedience to Allah's command (which means),

"And let there arise from amongst you a body of men who should invite to goodness, and enjoin equity and forbid evil. Such are they who are successful." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 104.]

In fact, these are traits of the Muslim *Ummah* which no-one can claim will cease to exist, even though it is deprived of political authority. The fact that the reins of power have not been in the hands of the Muslim *Ummah* for a long period of time is no excuse to abandon enjoining people to do good and forbidding them to do evil. Indeed, to enjoin virtue, forbid vice and believe in Allah are preconditions for the very existence of the Islamic *Ummah*:

"You are the best Ummah raised for the good of Mankind; you enjoin good and forbid evil and believe in Allah." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 110.]

As long as the Muslim *Ummah* continues to exist, its characteristics, including enjoining good and forbidding evil, will remain in existence as well.

[73] Surah At-Taghaabun (64), Ayah 16.

Those who actively work for Islam and strive to establish it on earth should take the lead in observing *Hisbah.* It is not sufficient that they do good and shun evil, but they should additionally enjoin every good and forbid every evil with a view to fulfilling the conditions for prevailing on earth, as Allah (SWT) says (which means): ***"Those [Muslim rulers] who, if we establish them in the land, [they] establish regular prayer and give Zakah, enjoin good and forbid evil."***[74] It is not acceptable to say that they are not supposed to establish regular prayer and pay *Zakah* until they achieve their dominating status. The same is also true of enjoining good and forbidding evil. It has been related that an Abbassid Caliph once rebuked one of his subjects who set up himself up as a Muhtasib without first seeking his permission. To back up his argument, the Caliph quoted the Qur'anic verse (which means):

"Those [Muslim rulers] who, if we establish them in the land, [they] establish regular prayer and give Zakah, enjoin good and forbid evil."[75]

By this he meant that this is solely the duty of the ruler or to whomever he delegates. The man disputed with him, quoting the verse (which means):

"The believers, men and women, are awliyyaa' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another: they enjoin good and forbid evil." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 71.]

The Caliph marveled at the man's proof and could not add a word. If only those who propagate these false opinions would return to the Truth and keep quiet as the Abbassid Caliph did!

There is no denying that powerful authority is far more capable of effectively enjoining good and forbidding evil than a powerless authority. But this should in no way prevent Muslims from practicing *Hisbah* in the absence of this powerful authority, as is the case today. Besides, if Muslims are obliged to practice it under the rule of a Muslim ruler even without seeking his permission, they are even more obliged to do so in his absence. No person with true insight would deny that the Qur'anic verses and Ahadeeth commanding us to practice *Hisbah* are absolute and non-restricted. Indeed, they address all Muslims everywhere and oblige them all within their limits and Allah knows best.

Besides, *Hisbah is* one of the basic necessities of the Islamic movement which should by no means be abandoned by those who work for Islam, or else their *Da'wah will* vanish and their endeavors will undoubtedly fail. Perhaps it is appropriate here to reiterate that the *Jahiliyyah* around us confronts us with various means and numerous challenges. That our *Shari'ah is* complete, all-inclusive and incorporates all responses to take up the challenge. Some of these challenges could be combated only by *Hisbah;* others only through *Da'wah;* and others only by *Jihad. If* we dispense with *Hisbah,* the *Jahiliyyah* around us will certainly defeat us, for by doing so we will, in fact, abandon one of the weapons which Allah (SWT) commands us to draw at the appropriate time and place. Every circumstance demands a specific weapon.

Indeed, we cannot but push aside as far as we can, any evil in the way of our *Da'wah* and enjoin every good that we think is neglected, in accordance with the

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[74] Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 41.
[75] Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 41.

regulations outlined by *Shari'ah* and the rulings made by the *Ulama*. By doing so we endeavour to live, and make people around us live, in an environment best suited for maintaining people's religion and managing their affairs in accordance with the Laws *of* their Lord. It is also our aim, as we mentioned earlier, to bring people to the worship of their Lord, as this is in itself one of the objectives of those working for Islam; until Allah (SWT) wills and gives enough support to establish the Caliphate whose role will be to safeguard the religion and to manage the world's affairs in accordance with its rules and regulations.

It is wrong to repeat the claim of some people who say that it is necessary to abandon enjoining good and forbidding evil in order to concentrate our efforts on removing `the biggest evil', by which they mean governing by the laws of *Jahiliyyah* and establish the 'greatest good' by which they mean governing by the laws of Allah. No-one would dispute the fact that implementing *Shari'ah* and ruling by it is a virtue that should be realized and that ruling by *Jahiliyyah is* an evil that should be eradicated. But there are some people who contend that there is a difference between enjoining every good and enjoining the so-called 'greatest good', and between forbidding every evil and forbidding 'the biggest evil', as they term it. If we assume that there really is a difference then this will be only in certain instances and situations and not others, and also for some individuals and not for others. These are matters which, as we have mentioned earlier while discussing the subject of the conflict of good and evil, our scholars have resolved and for which they have set criteria.

To abandon the obligation of *Hisbah* altogether, however, thinking that by doing so we will save our efforts from being dissipated and focus them on achieving the so-called 'greatest good' and uprooting the so-called 'greatest evil', is an attempt to put reason before *Shari'ah.* Those who maintain these opinions forget, or pretend to forget, that Allah, He who supports us and establishes our religion for us, is also He who commanded us to practice *Hisbah:*

"Allah will certainly help those who help His [cause]." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 40.]

How could we then hope for Allah's assistance to victory when we disobey Him by neglecting this vital duty? How could we expect His aid when we show indifference and do not feel anger at those who violate the sanctity of those things which Allah has made sacred? Instead, we go along like beasts, `thrusting our fingers in our ears and covering ourselves with our garments,' despite our ability to practice *Hisbah,* and we still claim that we are striving for something better and more comprehensive as though we were guardians of Allah's religion, confirming or deleting whatever we want. Imam Ash-Shafi'ee said, *"Whoever does not feel angry for the sake of Allah, even when he is made so, is virtually a donkey."*

Those who see evil being committed and do not attempt to change it despite their ability to do so with no fear of harm, will have their hearts sealed by Allah to such a point that they will come to consider evil as good and good as evil. They will deserve to be cursed by Allah like the Children of Israel:

"Those among the Children of Israel who disbelieved were cursed by the tongue of David and of Jesus, son of Mary. That was because they disobeyed [Allah and His Messenger] and used to transgress. They did not to forbid one another from the iniquity which they committed. Evil indeed was what they used to do." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayat 78-79.]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, "By *Him in whose Hands my soul is, you must either enjoin good and forbid evil and help the sinful to uphold Truth, or Allah will cause your hearts to detest one another or He will curse you as He has cursed them (the Children of Israel)."*[76]

It is clear that Allah (SWT) has instructed us to change every evil, be it great or small. The Arabic word *munkar* translated here as 'evil' in the Hadeeth *"Whoever sees a Munkar must change it,"*[77] -is used without the definite article, hence referring to every type of *munkar* (evil). So do not bother to reply to those who say that it is in the interest of *Da'wah* to abandon *Hisbah.* Indeed, we do not do any good for *Da'wah* except in obeying the commands of Allah who knows best, and who ordered us to practice *Hisbah.* We either act as we are commanded or we will be striving only to undermine our *Da'wah.*

3. Waging Jihad in the Way of Allah

It saddens us to address the subject of *Jihad.*

Jihad is a great obligation which is dearly beloved to the hearts of the true believers despite the hardships and difficulties it brings. For it assists them in this life by taking them from humiliation and degradation, to honor and dignity and away from defeat to victory, by the will of Allah. It will also assist them in the Hereafter by taking them to Paradise:

"Whoever is removed away from the Fire and is admitted to Paradise will have attained success for the life. And the life of this world is nothing but an illusory enjoyment." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 185.]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:
"Never will there combine upon a servant the dust of battle in the Way of Allah and the smoke of Hell-Fire."[78]

"He who fights in the Way of Allah for the time between the milking of a camel is guaranteed entry to Paradise."[79]

"Whoever gets his feet covered in dust [fighting] in the Way of Allah, He forbids the Hell-Fire upon him."[80]

It is for this reason that some of the Prophet's companions cried when they were unable to spend their money in the Way of Allah because of their poverty,

"They turned back, their eyes overflowing with tears of grief that they could not find anything to spend [for Jihad]." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 92.]

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[76] Ahmad and Abu Dawud.
[77] Bukhari and Muslim.
[78] Imam Ahmad.
[79] Ahmad, Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi.
[80] Bukhari.

Yet, it is *Jihad* which Muslims try their best to avoid these days. One was quite right to entitle it 'The Forgotten Obligation'. This very clearly reflects the enormous gulf between us today and the first generation of our *Ummah.* It also explains why Allah honored them so much and why he has left us to fall yet deeper into the pit of humiliation and defeat. The Prophet (ﷺ) was quite right when he said,

"When people become stingy towards the dinar and the dirham, deal in fine things, and engage themselves in agricultural activities, forsaking Jihad in the Way of Allah, Allah will send down on them a calamity that will not be dispelled away from them until they return to their religion."[81]

What the Prophet (ﷺ) predicted has already happened. People have come to think of their lives and their wealth as too precious to offer to Allah (SWT), although He has offered them a great reward for purchasing it from them, despite the fact that it is His own property:

"Surely Allah has purchased of the believers their lives and their property in return for the Garden they shall have…"

He has also guided them to the market where they can take up this profitable deal:

"…They fight in the way of Allah. They slay and are slain."

He also promised to sign the contract:

"…a promise [that He has made] incumbent on Himself…"

He also placed His promise in the most glorious Books He sent to His Messengers:

"...in the Torah and the Gospel and the Qur'an. And who is more faithful to his promise than Allah?"

He also gives them good news of rejoicing over the bargain they have concluded with Him:

"…Rejoice then in your bargain that you have made."

The reason:

"…That is the supreme triumph." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 111.]

It is surely a great success for a servant to offer property which is not his and over which he has no control, in exchange for a Garden as vast as the heavens and the earth put together. A Garden which no one will ever enter due to his good work. `Aisha narrates that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"Pay up, come closer (to Allah) and auger well for no-one will enter Paradise because of his work alone." People asked: "Not even you, O Messenger of Allah." He replied: "Not even me, unless Allah cloaks me in His Mercy."[82]

Moreover, Allah is so generous with those who have accepted this deal by returning to them the price they paid and granting them the reward He promised:

"Think not of those who are slain in the way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are living. With their Lord they have provision." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 169.]

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[81] Ahmad and Abu Dawud. Ibn Al-Qattaan classifies it as Sahih.
[82] Bukhari and Muslim.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"The souls of the martyrs reside in the bodies of green birds that perch on chandeliers suspended from the Throne and* fly *about in Paradise wherever they please."*[83]

And so, as promised, Allah (SWT) has, in His Generosity and Bounty, given those who accepted the deal, their lives and wealth back and, moreover, He has provided for them. Despite all this, present-day Muslims neglect this great obligation, turn away from this supreme triumph and refuse to ascend to the topmost of this religion, *"And the topmost of it (Islam) is Jihad."*[84] Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"Warfare is ordained for you, though it is hateful unto you; but it may happen that you hate a thing which is good for you and it may happen that you love a thing which is bad for you. Allah knows and you do not know." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 216.]

Now that people have come to detest, and consequently avoid, *Jihad,* its features are lost, its sciences forgotten and its influence on people's hearts weakened. Even discussing the subject of *Jihad* has become too hard as a result of people's ignorance and detest for it. This is so because ***"the term was prolonged for them and so their hearts - were hardened."*** [Surah Al-Hadid (57), Ayah 16.]

Talking about *Jihad* has become difficult, because the life of this world holds us back; Satan casts false hope and fear in our hearts; cowardice has made us fear death; the illusory enjoyment of this life stands as a stumbling stone in our way towards it; and even the soul itself has become eager to shun this obligation, saying (which means):

"Our Lord! Why have you ordained fighting for us? If only you would give us respite for a while!" [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 77.]

Allah's reply to this comes in a very beautiful way (which means):

"Say (unto them, O Muhammad): The comfort of this world is scant; the Hereafter will be better for him who fears Allah and keep his duty towards Him; and you will not be wronged even down to a date-stone. Wherever you may be, death will overtake you, even though you may be in lofty towers." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayat 77-78.]

So let us leave the scant comfort of this world behind our backs and work for the Hereafter, which is far better for the pious. Only then can we love and long for *Jihad* as the Prophet's companions did. Only then would we scent the fragrance of Paradise whenever *Jihad is* mentioned. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"Paradise lies under the shades of swords."*[85] Only then can we talk about fighting in the way of Allah.

But from where shall we start discussing this great obligation? Shall we initiate our discussion about its nature and essence? Or its objectives and reasons? Or its stages and development? Or its historical and legal necessity? Or shall we start talking about those who are left behind at the time of *Jihad,* giving their feeble excuses?

Let us go back to the beginning, to the day when our Prophet (ﷺ) first received the revelation.

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[83] Ahmad, Ad-Daarimi and Tirmidhi.

[84] Tirmidhi who classifies it as Sahih.

[85] Bukhari and Muslim.

Ibn Al-Qayyim said, *"The first thing His Lord revealed to him was His command to him to read in the Name of His Lord who created. This happened at the beginning of his mission. Allah's command to him was therefore to read in his heart only and not to communicate to others what had been revealed to him. Later on, Allah (SWT) revealed the verse:* ***"O you enveloped in [garments] Arise and warn!"*** [Surah Al-Muddathir (74), Ayat 1-2.]

So, in the beginning the Prophet (ﷺ) was told of his role as a Prophet by the word ***"Read,"***[86] then he was informed of his role as a Messenger in ***"O you, enveloped in [garments]! Arise and warn!".*** Allah then commanded him to warn his immediate kin, then his tribe, then the surrounding Arabs, then all the Arabs, then, finally, all Mankind and jinn.

Muhammad (ﷺ) then spent the first ten years or so of his mission propagating the Message, without recourse to *Jihad* or *Jizyah* (tribute), as he was commanded to restrain himself and to endure and forgive those who harmed him. Then he was permitted to emigrate and to engage in fighting. He was first instructed to fight only those who fought him and leave alone those who did not. Later he was instructed to fight the *Mushrikoon* until all religion is for Allah.

Following the command to fight *Jihad,* the disbelievers were of three categories: those with whom the Muslims had peace treaties *(Ahlus-Sulh wal-hudnah),* those with whom they were at war *(Ahlul Harb)* and those non-Muslims living under the protection of the Islamic government in return for paying *Jizyah (Ahludh-Dhimmah).* The Prophet (ﷺ) was instructed to fulfil the treaties he had made with the first group as long as they adhered to the terms of these treaties. But, in the cases where he expected their treachery, or had firm evidence of it, he was free to rescind the treaty, serve them notice of its termination and proceed to fight them. He (ﷺ) was also commanded to fight those who broke their solemn pledges after their treaty with him. The revelation of Surah at-Taubah (Surah No. 9) set out in detail the *Shari'ah's* position on all these categories. He was instructed by Allah to fight the People of the Book (the Christians and the Jews) until they paid *Jizyah* (tribute) or embraced Islam. He was also instructed to fight the disbelievers and hypocrites and be harsh on them.

Fighting the disbelievers was carried out with the sword and fighting the hypocrites was conducted with argument and the tongue. The Prophet (ﷺ) was commanded to divide *Ahlul-`Ahd* into three categories:

(1) Those who broke their oaths after their covenant and did not remain true to him. These he was ordered to fight and prevail on them.

(2) Those with whom he had made temporary treaties and who had not subsequently failed him in anything, nor had they supported anyone against him. These he was commanded to fulfill his treaty with them to the end of their term.

(3) Those with whom he had no treaties and who did not fight him, or those with whom he had permanent treaties. These he was instructed to give a respite of four months, after which he would fight them. Accordingly, he fought those who broke their pledges and gave a respite to those with whom he had made no treaty or those with a four month treaty. He honored the treaty of those with

[86] Surah Al-'Alaq (96), Ayah 1.

whom he had one to the end of their term. But all these embraced Islam before the end of their term. He also demanded *Jizyah* from the People of the Book in return for their protection and the practice of their religion without fear of attack or persecution.

To reiterate, after the revelation of Surah Taubah, the disbelievers were divided into three categories:

1. *Ahlul-Harb* (those at war with him).
2. *Ahlul-`Ahd* (those with whom he had a treaty).
3. *Ahludh-Dhimmah* (People of the Book who pay *Jizyah* in return for the Muslims' protection of them).

When the second group embraced Islam, only those at war with him and *Ahludh-Dhimmah* remained his opponents.

So we can say that Islam came to enter all Mankind in the religion of Allah:

"Say: `O men! I am sent unto you all, as the Messenger of Allah, to whom belongs the dominion of the Heavens and the Earth: there is no God but He. It is He Who gives life and causes death." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 158.]

It also came to wipe out all forms of *shirk* from the face of the earth so that Allah alone would be worshipped with no partner or associate. As the Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"I was sent with the sword before the Hour until Allah alone is worshipped with no partners."*[87] In order to achieve this the Prophet's call in Makkah was: *"Say, there is no god worthy of worship except Allah":*

"Say: O Mankind! I am but a plain warner unto you." [Surah Al-Hajj (22), Ayah 49.]

To this end, the Muslim armies also set forth from Madeenah to all parts of the Arabian Peninsula, and from there to Rome and Persia. The Muslim armies continued to pour out of all the capitals of the Caliphate, which, in a period of thirteen centuries, extended from Madeenah to Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo and, finally, to Constantinople. 'The Battalions of Truth' carried the banner of Islam all over the world.

The Muslims' aim in all these *Da'wah* actions was one. Indeed, the aim of the Prophet (ﷺ) while preaching Islam in Makkah and his destruction of the idols around the Ka'bah later on was the same. It was the same aim that prompted the Muslim armies to travel the earth. The Muslim soldier Rab'ee bin `Aamir expressed this aim so beautifully when Rustum, the Persian leader asked him, *"What prompted you to come?"* Rab'ee replied, *"Indeed Allah has sent us to bring whoever He wills out of the worship of the created to the worship of the Creator. From the injustice of man-made religions to the justice of Islam. And from the hardships of this life to the ease and comfort of the Hereafter."* In fact, this had always been the aim of Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions. This aim never changed, but the means and methods leading to it did, by Allah's leave, in such a way as to suit the environment in which the newly-born *Da'wah* settled. This happened as a result of Allah's revelation to His Prophet (ﷺ) and His categorical and decisive instructions to him. The Prophet (ﷺ) started his

[87] Imam Ahmad.

Da'wah in secrecy, passing the teachings of Islam only to those closest to him whom he felt would respond favourably to the call to Allah. Then, three years later, he was commanded to preach openly, which he did in Makkah and in other places. This phase lasted for ten years during which the Prophet (ﷺ), as well as his companions, was instructed to endure patiently the hardships to which he and his associates were subjected to and not to fight in self defense. This was why he refused to allow those Muslims who pledged allegiance to him at the second pledge of `Aqabah, to fight the *Mushrikoon.* He told them, *"We have not been instructed to do so."*[88]

Following his emigration to Madeenah, the Prophet (ﷺ) was permitted to fight only those who fought him. It was during this phase that the Battles of Badr, Uhud, Al-Ahzaab (the Confederates), the accompanying missions and operations took place. With the retreat of the Ahzaab (the Confederates) from Madeenah, the final phase concerning the rulings on *Jihad* commenced. The Prophet (ﷺ) on returning from the Battle of Al-Ahzaab, said, *"Now has come the time for us] to attack them, and they will no longer attack us. From now on it is we who will march onto them."*[89]

Surah Taubah was revealed to clarify the established rulings of *Jihad* until the Day of Judgement. Allah's command therein was that war must be waged on all disbelievers. *Jihad,* therefore, became an obligation to spread the religion of Allah and make His word and Laws uppermost. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"I have been sent with the sword before the Hour until Allah alone with no associates is worshipped. My sustenance has been placed under the shadow of my lance, and humiliation and disgrace has been placed on those who oppose me."*[90]

The Muslim armies, with the Qur'an in one hand and the sword in the other, set out to call nations, kingdoms, empires and tribes to the religion of Allah. Whoever believed was welcomed into the fold of Islam, but whoever rejected Islam had "to pay the tribute readily, being brought low," or fought with the sword in case of refusal.

This aim had never changed. The *Da'wah* movement and *Jihad* of the Prophet (ﷺ), as well as that of his companions and those who came after him, revolved around one single aim which Rab'ee bin `Aamir expressed thus, *"to bring the creation out of the worship of the created to the worship of the Creator,"* and as our Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"until Allah alone, with no associates, is worshipped."* The Qur'an expresses it in the most excellent and complete form:

"And fight them until there is no persecution, and religion is wholly for Allah." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 39.]

Our Prophet's (ﷺ) Message was a call to the hearts to throw off the cloak of *shirk* and to reject any deity worshipped other than Allah. The demolition of the idols in Makkah on the Day of Victory[91] was a symbolic, and literal, manifestation of doing away with all deities worshipped other than Allah. The sending forth of Muslim armies into combat against the disbelievers was a call to *Tawheed* and a way of wiping out the remnants of *shirk.* Indeed, fighting was a call to Tawheed, as the

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[88] Ibn Ishaaq in Seerat-ur-Rasool.
[89] Bukhari.
[90] Imam Ahmad.
[91] Translator's note: This refers to the day when the Prophet (ﷺ) and his followers entered Makkah victoriously with the help of Allah, the Almighty.

Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"I have been commanded [by Allah] to fight people until they attest that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah and that Muhammad is His Messenger."*[92]

Fighting was a *Da'wah* to *Tawheed* because the rulers of the empires and kingdoms of the time used their power and influence to prevent Islam and those calling to it from reaching the land of Allah and His creation, claiming that it was their land and that those people were their subjects. Fighting them was therefore indispensable.

Fighting was also necessary to crush *shirk* by removing the tyrant rulers of these societies where they legislated for the people and forced them to go for judgement in their disputes to their own man-made laws through enticement and coercion.

Fighting was also necessary to remove every ruler who was worshipped other than Allah, and who opposed the call of Islam. It was necessary to remove every ruler who haughtily refused to enter the religion of Islam or to pay *Jizyah,* insisting on exalting themselves in the land and practicing corruption.

Fighting was necessary to obliterate *fitnah* (persecution and *shirk)* and raise the Law of Allah above all else:

"And fight them until persecution is no more and religion is wholly for Allah." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 39.]

No-one claims he created anything himself apart from Allah, or anything with Him (SWT). Therefore, no-one has the right to legislate alongside or instead of Allah. Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"No-one has the right to judge between any of Allah's creation; not even between Muslims and disbelievers, except by the rule of Allah and that of His Messenger (ﷺ)."*

We, as Muslims, are commanded to establish the sovereignty of Allah's Law in the land of Allah and over His creation. We are commanded not to allow anyone to judge between people by anything other than the Law of Allah. Those who refuse and resist must be fought.

Some people would say that we are imposing our guardianship over humanity. Our reply is that this is the guardianship of Allah's Law and religion in His land and over His creation. We are simply carrying out Allah's instructions to bring it about for the common good of the people, in our capacity as ***"the best Ummah that has been raised up for Mankind."*** [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 110.]

Indeed, people will never find a law which is more just or better than that of Allah. Whoever wishes to live by Islam will certainly be saved in this life and in the life to come; but whoever chooses to remain a disbeliever, he is free to do so as long as he pays *Jizyah* and submits to the laws of Islam.

The ignorant and *Jahili* people will ask, "But who has given you and given Islam that right to govern and lead Mankind?" Our reply is this, "Allah, the Lord of Mankind, the King of Mankind and the God of Mankind, has given us this right." We then ask

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[92] Bukhari and Muslim.

them, "And who has given you the right to legislate and rule by whatever laws you please?"

This is our understanding of *Jihad* in the way of Allah. Those who disapprove should consider the matter again and correct their understanding of their religion.

Indeed, Islam is not merely a set of beliefs held in the heart, which suffice it for us to affirm with the tongue and defend with the pen and argument, quoting the verse (which means):

"Say, [It is] the truth from your Lord; wherefore let him who will, believe, and let him who will, disbelieve." [Surah Al-Kahf (18), Ayah 30.]

This is rather a twisted and mutilated interpretation of the verse. For Islam is a way of life; it is the law of Allah revealed to regulate people's lives. This is why it is not sufficient to give a speech or a sermon in which we only mention our *`Aqeedah* and defend it. On the contrary, we must carry this faith in everything we do: *Da'wah* with the tongue and in a kind manner; a proof with eloquence; and *Jihad* with the sword. The tongue, kindness and eloquence are for hearts and minds; so either people believe and have peace of mind or they will have to pay *Jizyah* in humiliation, with the laws of Islam reigning supreme. But if they refuse to do so out of arrogance and obstinacy, then we will have to wield the sword until all these false deities are removed; and only then can we recite the verse (which means):

"Say, [It is] the truth from your Lord; wherefore let him who will, believe, and let him' who will, disbelieve."

This is the reason behind fighting in Islam, as Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"And fight them until persecution is no more and religion is wholly for Allah."

And such have been the stages Islam has gone through. The final stage it reached and whose rulings remain effective until the Day of Judgement are mentioned in the following verses (which mean):

"And fight against the Mushrikoon (polytheists, pagans, idolaters, disbelievers in the Oneness of Allah, etc.) collectively as they fight against you collectively." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 36.]

"Then when the sacred months (the 1st, 7th, 11th, and 12th months of the Islamic calendar) have passed, then kill the Mushrikoon wherever you find them, and capture them and besiege them, and prepare for them each and every ambush." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 5.]

"Fight against those who (1) believe not in Allah, (2) nor in the Last Day, (3) nor forbid that which has been made forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, and (4) those who do not acknowledge the religion of truth (i. e. Islam) among the people of the Book (Jews and Christians), until they pay the Jizyah with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 29.]

These are the reasons for fighting *Jihad* in Islam.

Although Islam does not need to justify the obligation of *Jihad,* it would do no harm to remind those who feel ashamed at talking about it as though it were a stigma on the face of our religion, those who volunteer to please *Jahiliyyah* and its adherents, who do not feel ashamed at fighting for their *Jahili* creeds and laws.

Today, many Muslims escape *Jihad* and avoid talking about it, finding excuses in so doing in order to please their `masters' in the East and the West and in order to avoid their wrath!

There are some Muslims today who ask the question, "What do you mean, *Jihad?* Allah commands us to practice *Da'wah* only, for He says (which means):

"Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better." [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 125.]

These people mistakenly believe that *Jihad* contradicts Allah's instruction to invite people to Islam with wisdom and fair preaching. However, they ignore, or rather pretend to ignore, the fact that this verse concerns the legal knowledge of *Da'wah* as well as its methods, and that *Jihad* has its own science and its own verses which command and enjoin it in addition to outlining its rulings and legal knowledge:

"O Prophet! Wage Jihad against the disbelievers and the hypocrites, and be harsh against them. Their ultimate abode is Hell, and evil indeed is that destination." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 73.]

There are other Muslims who say, "*Jihad* in Islam is solely for self-defense! So let *Jahiliyyah* rest assured in its role, for we will not fight against it as long as it does not attack us in our lands, and let us coexist peacefully!" The ignorant who maintain such foolish opinions attempt, in their stupidity, to equate Islam with *Jahiliyyah,* giving each the right to dominate its own stretch of Allah's land and practice its own laws and legitimacy over a section of His creation!

There are also those who say that *Jihad* should be postponed to an indefinite time. They support their ill-founded claims with the fact that the Prophet (ﷺ) started his *Da'wah* in secret, then practiced it openly despite all the harm he had to endure, then fought those who initiated war against him, then, finally, set out to fight the disbelievers without awaiting provocation. Why then should we not go through the same phases as did our Prophet (ﷺ)? Why rush matters?

Such ignoramuses simply forget, or pretend to forget, that the Prophet (ﷺ) did all this in response to Allah's instructions, and that he would have sinned had he disobeyed or transgressed these commands (far be it from him to do so). They forget, or pretend to forget, that the rulings of *Jihad* were established in its final stage and that were we to neglect these rulings or abandon them we will certainly have committed a sin.

There are those who believe that *Jihad is* an obligation, but, they concede that we must not undertake it without the leadership of a powerful Muslim Caliph, and as we have no such leader at the present time we must not attempt *Jihad* at all!

Again, out of ignorance or malice, they confuse the saying of the *Ulama* that *Jihad* should not be carried out without the permission of Muslim ruler and the status quo, where no Muslim ruler is in power. Trying as we are to establish a Muslim ruler through *Jihad* to rule over us, how can some people come to us and say that *Jihad is* not permitted without a Muslim ruler?

Ibn Qudaamah says, *"The absence of the Muslim ruler should not [be used as an excuse] to put off Jihad, otherwise its exigency and advantages will be lost by so*

doing; and if the Muslims happen to take some booty (from the war] they should distribute it in accordance with the laws of Shari'ah."

Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"Whoever takes it upon himself to undertake fighting against the disbelievers and punishing the wicked must be obeyed in whatever acts of obedience [of Allah] he commands in that regard."*

No wonder opinions and excuses are so abundant. In fact, the matter in hand is deadly serious, the obligation taxing and people are required to sell their lives and leave their wives and children for the sake of Allah. How could they not be cowardly when their hearts have been filled with love for this life and loathing of death? Similar excuses were also prevalent during the time of the Prophet (ﷺ): Some said (which means),

"Grant me leave (to be exempted from Jihad) and put me not into trial." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 49.]

Others said (which means):

"March not forth in the heat." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 81.]

"Had we known that fighting will take place, we would certainly have followed you." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 167.]

"Our Lord! Why have you ordained for us fighting? Would that You had granted us respite for a short period?" [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 77.]

"These people (Muslims) are deceived by their religion." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 49.]

"Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusions!" [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 12.]

"There is no stand [possible] for you [against the enemy attack!], therefore go back!" [Surah Ar-Ra'd (13), Ayah 13.]

"Our possessions and our families occupied us, so ask forgiveness for us." [Surah Al-Fath (48), Ayah 11.]

"Truly, our homes lie open [to the enemy]." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 13.]

But Allah's word comes to stigmatize all these people as cowards and liars:

"And if they had intended to march out, they would certainly have made ready some preparation for it, but Allah was averse to their being sent forth, so He made them lag behind, and it was said [to them]: `Sit you with those who sit [at home]." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 46.]

Jihad remains too high a summit to be mounted by the hypocrites and those with some disease in their hearts. *Jihad* in the Way of Allah remains detesting of those who have detested it: disdaining *them* as they have disdained it. In fact, it remains the preserve of its own people who offer to give up life on this earth in eagerness to meet Allah, the Beneficent, and dwell in His Gardens. *Jihad* remains the exclusive concern of its people who know that it is an obligation enjoined on them by Allah. It remains a necessity dictated by the nature of Islam, provoked by *Jahiliyyah* and narrated by history.

Jihad is a necessity dictated by *Shari'ah* by way of a number of obligatory acts which could not be fulfilled today without waging *Jihad.* It is dictated on us by:

1. The unanimous agreement of the *Mama* to remove the disbelieving ruler. Are our rulers not considered disbelievers by substituting *Shari'ah* with man-made laws and by ruling the people by *Jahili* laws? *Is Jihad* not obligatory on us today to remove such rulers?

2. The unanimous agreement of the *Ulama* to fight any powerful group which refuse to rule by one or more of the Islamic laws until they observe them. Are the groups dominating our countries today not uncommitted to most Islamic laws? Is *Jihad* not obligatory upon us to force them to abide by the laws of Allah which they have rejected?

3. The unanimous agreement of the *Ulama* to install a Caliph in office. Is the Caliphate not absent today? Was it not abolished by our enemies by force and by the sword? Is *Jihad* then not the only way to reestablish it?

4. The unanimous agreement of the *Ulama* to defend the Muslim lands and regain all parts of them taken by the disbelievers. Is *Jihad,* therefore, not obligatory to regain Palestine, Andalusia, the Balkans, the Muslim republics of Central Asia and other parts of the world that were once Muslim?

5. The unanimous agreement of the *Ulama* to help set free all Muslim captives. Are jails and detention centers the world over not filled with thousands upon thousands of Muslims scholars? Is *Jihad* not obligatory to rescue them?

Indeed, fighting is binding upon us to remove the disbelieving rulers who dominate our countries, to restrain the groups of people who surround these rulers, support them and defend their man-made laws, to install a Caliph for all the Muslims, to regain the lands which we have lost and to help release Muslim prisoners.

Then our troops will travel the world, calling empires and kingdoms to the faith of Allah, by the Qur'an and the sword, exactly as did the first generation of our *Ummah* when they set forth into the lands of Persia and Rome, and others.

Is *Jihad,* then, not our means to realize all these legal obligations? Or shall we neglect them and sin and lose our faith as a result of this?

Or shall we ***"cling heavily to the earth,"***[93] taking pleasure in the life of this world rather than the Hereafter? Or shall we turn away from the Truth?

"And if you turn away [from Islam and obedience to Allah], He will exchange you for some other people, and they will not be your likes." [Surah Muhammad (47), Ayah 38.]

We are aware of the fact that there are many honest and sincere Muslims who agree with us that *Jihad* in the way of Allah is an obligation. They also fear the adversity of neglecting it, lest they should be included among those about whom the Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"He who dies without having fought or sought fighting in the way of*

[93] Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 38.

Allah, has died on a branch of hypocrisy."[94] But when they turn to consider the present condition of Muslims they find that they are oppressed and in a position of weakness, with no might, state or *Imam.* This state of affairs makes them so frustrated that they tend to delay *Jihad,* coming to terms with the present oppression, and contenting themselves with going through the same phases as did the Prophet (ﷺ).

By maintaining such views, these people commit a grave mistake. For when the Prophet (ﷺ) and his followers restrained themselves from fighting, they were under clear instructions from Allah to do so. As for us today, we are ordered to fight in accordance with the final rulings on *Jihad* in the Qur'an. We will certainly be committing a sin if we neglect this obligation.

Some people would say, "But we cannot do that as we are in a weak position; we must patiently endure whether we like it or not."

Our reply is this. On the contrary, we must prepare for *Jihad* until such a day when we will be able to undertake it, then we shall fight. This is the only way out for us from this dreadful impasse in which we find ourselves as a result of the weakness of many generations before us. We must break down this barrier which we have built around ourselves. Are we not the ones addressed by Allah in the following verse (which means): ***"And make ready against them all you can of power including steeds of war (tanks, planes. Missiles, artillery, etc.) to terrorise the enemy of Allah and your enemy,"*** [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 60.]

This is one of the main differences between us and the early Muslims in Makkah. They did not fight or prepare for fighting because they were not commanded to do so. Today we are certainly obliged to fight. If, however, we are unable to do so we must make preparations for *Jihad* until we become able to wage it.

As a matter of fact, during our preparations, we should not consider ourselves as living in a phase of weakness, as early Muslims lived in Makkah. For this phase was abrogated along with all its rulings. But we are rather in a `preparation phase', as it were. The difference between the phase we are going through today and the phase of weakness in Makkah when Muslims were commanded to withdraw from the disbelievers and show restraint and forgiveness to them, is that no fighting or preparations for it were enjoined on the believers. The *Sahabah,* therefore, avoided getting involved in any war at this stage.

Today, however, we are obliged to make preparations for it with a view to fulfilling the religious duty which has been neglected by so many Muslims. Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"It is an obligation to make preparations for Jihad at times when it is not possible to wage it due to weakness. For anything without which an obligation cannot be fulfilled is an obligation in itself."*

Jihad is an obligation dictated upon us by the nature of this faith and the nature of the *Jahiliyyah* around us. Islam and disbelief cannot coexist peacefully on this earth. By their very nature one does not like to see the other establishing its dominance over a part of this world, no matter how remote and distant they may be from each other. They are not at all alike, for they are both inclined to uproot and annihilate each other. The cycle of wars will persist between the two until Allah inherits the earth and what it contains. The Prophet (ﷺ), said, *"A group of my*

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[94] Muslim and Abu Dawud.

Ummah will continue to uphold the Truth until the last of their number fights Ad-Dajjal (the Anti-Christ)."[95]

It is one of the established laws which we should not try to overlook or neglect. If we try to ignore it, our enemies will not rest until, Allah forbid, they turn us back from our faith, if they can. Each of the two camps has clear objectives in this battle, although the camp of disbelief always tends to disguise its intentions, penetrate our ranks and takes us aback, while we are unaware of their guile and wicked plans.

Islam's aim is to destroy disbelief, uproot it, prevent its laws and practices from holding sway over humanity and restrict it to dead beliefs in the hearts of the People of the Book; unable to reign supreme as Islamic laws force them to pay *Jizyah* with willing submission, whilst feeling themselves subdued. Islam aims to eradicate the roots of disbelief and plant faith in their place and wipe out the beliefs and laws *of Jahiliyyah* completely to raise the laws of Allah up high. This is the aim of Islam and the Muslims must declare it openly and prepare for its fulfilment. *Shirk,* in turn, seeks to destroy Islam, obliterate its features and destroy its laws completely. To achieve this, it uses all the means at its disposal, sparing no effort and leaving no plot untried. This is what the Qur'an tells us in the following verses (which mean):

"Many of the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) wish that they could turn away as disbelievers after you have believed, out of envy from their own selves, even after the truth [that Muhammad (ﷺ) is Allah's Messenger] has become manifest unto them." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 109.]

"And they will not cease fighting against you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 217.]

"And never will the Jews and Christians be pleased with you until you follow their creed." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 120.]

"They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 32.]

We would be extremely stupid to overlook these clear proofs of our enemies' animosity and put our swords back in their sheaths before we succeed in vanquishing all the material power that protects *kufr,* raises its flag and makes it prevail, and also before we obliterate the features of *kufr* and defeat all its systems. We will be foolish to imagine that *kufr* will desist from attacking us if we do not fight against it. We will undoubtedly lose twice if we commit such a mistake: once in this life and again in the Hereafter. We will lose both our faith and our life because hoards of *kufr* will certainly attack us once and for all, for they regard neither pact nor honor in respect of us. They will by all means massacre us even though we have not drawn our swords in their faces. History testifies to this fact and teaches us that *Jihad is* a historical necessity. The Prophet (ﷺ) never raised his sword against Qur'aish before *Hijrah,* but this did not prevent them from harming him and killing his followers. They did this for the simple reason that he called upon them saying: *"I am a warner to you before a terrible punishment,"*[96] and *"Say: There is no god except Allah."*[97]

The Prophet (ﷺ) was not instructed to fight anyone while he was still in Makkah. On the contrary, he was commanded to forgive and overlook the harm he suffered

[95] Muslim.
[96] Imam Ahmad.
[97] Imam Ahmad.

and restrain himself from taking revenge. But none of this prevented *Jahiliyyah* from continuing to torture and kill Muslims. The *Jahiliyyah* at the time had no aim but to force Muslims away from their faith and back again to its fold.

When the Qur'aish sensed the Prophet's (ﷺ) intention to migrate to Madeenah, they gathered all their strength to kill him despite the fact that he left them the land, the people and their false gods. Allah (SWT) protected His Messenger (ﷺ), who made his way safely towards Madeenah. But in spite of everything, the Qur'aish sent their men after him to take him alive or dead before he reached his destination.

The disbelievers refuse to leave Islam alone even though it makes its way to another land far away from theirs. By their very nature they strive hard to destroy it wherever it may be. This was why they led their armies against it in the Battles of Badr, Uhud and Al-Ahzaab and were, on each of these occasions, determined not to return without annihilating the Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions.

Allah had instructed the Prophet (ﷺ) to endure and desist from responding to the disbelievers' attacks for reasons required by the newly-born faith. Fighting was then forbidden, and Allah (SWT) protected His Prophet (ﷺ), His religion and His *Da'wah* against the disbelievers' wicked plans. But when the Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions emigrated to Madeenah they were then instructed to fight those who fought them. They did not then carry on to say, "Let us forgive the disbelievers and endure as we did in Makkah and Allah will protect His faith as He had done then." Had they said this and acted upon it, the forces of the Qur'aish would have certainly vanquished them once and for all and Islam would have never prevailed again.

Later, when the command was given to fight all the *Mushrikoon* collectively ***"until religion is wholly for Allah",*** Muslims were not permitted to remain inside Madeenah saying that they would confine themselves to practicing self-defense and that they would not initiate wars. If they had said so and acted upon it, their *Da'wah* would not have extended beyond the confines of Madeenah and the hostile Arab tribes would have stood united to prevent Islam from taking one single step forward into their lands. Furthermore, had they done so, they would not have reached the Persian and Roman empires and the armies of *kufr* would have pounced on this handful of believers who disobeyed. Allah's command to wage *Jihad* and finished off the new religion once and for all.

But none of this happened. For Allah (SWT) guaranteed, in His Wisdom and Might, to establish a generation of Muslims that would say (which means), ***"We, hear, and we obey,"***[98] a generation that would patiently endure when ordered to conduct *Jihad.* It was on the shoulders of this generation that the edifice of Islam was built and it was with its blood that its *Da'wah* was disseminated and its lands expanded.

History is a witness to the fact that once the Muslims sit back, in weakness or in negligence, and decline to march forth, then *Jahiliyyah* comes to them with its own armies to push them back and attack their lands and homes. It is a great lesson for us that our enemies start attacking us and conquering us from the point where we stop our advances. When the Muslim advance stopped at the Wall of China to the East, the Tartars' large armies came from behind it after sometime to destroy Islam, crush Muslims and tear the Caliphate apart.

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[98] Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 285.

Likewise, when the Muslim advances came to a halt after the capture of Andalusia and the South of France, the Muslim armies sustained a crushing defeat. Later, the Crusaders came from the same area to push us out of Spain. Then their armies and ships circumnavigated the Cape of Good Hope, dominated the Red Sea and landed on its eastern shores to threaten the Land of Hijaz.

Similarly, after the Ottoman advances came to a halt at the gates of Vienna, the European armies came from the centre of the continent to bring down the Caliphate in Istanbul and to advance to tear apart the Muslim empire.

Indeed, it is a great lesson that history teaches us as though it is saying to us, "If you do not fight with the Truth, your enemy will fight you with falsehood. If you do not advance to attack them, they will move forward to attack you. If you do not bring them out of darkness into light with the sword, they will instead bring you from light into darkness by the sword."

The lesson that history teaches us, the nature of this religion, the hidden, wicked plots of the enemies and the rulings of Islam all dictate the necessity of *Jihad* in the way of Allah.

Ibn Taymeeyah said: *"It is unanimously agreed by all Muslims that as the foundation of the prescribed fighting rests on Jihad so that all religion is for Allah and that His word will become the uppermost, whoever stands in the way of Jihad must be fought by the agreement of the Muslims. But as for those whom we are not supposed to fight, such as women, children, monks, the elderly, the blind and People of the Book who pay Jizyah, they are not killed unless they fight with either words or actions against Islam."*

This is the consensus amongst the majority of the *Ulama.* Even though some of them maintain that all these people must be killed on account of their *kufr* alone, apart from women and children, who are considered as spoils for the Muslims. The first opinion, however, is the correct one, for if the intention is that the religion of Allah prevails, we need to fight only those who fight us. Allah says (which means):

"Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you, but transgress not the limits. Truly, Allah likes not the transgressors." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 190.]

This is because Allah only allowed killing which is required for the betterment of creation: ***"For persecution is worse than killing."*** [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 217.]

This means that the persecution of the Muslims by the disbelievers is even worse than killing, despite the latter being evil. Those who do not prevent Muslims from establishing the faith of Allah harm only themselves by their *kufr.* This is why *Shari'ah* permitted fighting the disbelievers as a whole, but not killing the ones amongst them who were helpless such as women and children. If a *kafir is* captured in battle or arrested in any other context, however, the Muslim ruler will decide what benefit he can derive from him: enslaving him, releasing him, killing him or ransoming him in return for money or the freedom of a Muslim. This is the opinion of many scholars of Islam as clearly stated in the Qur'an and the Sunnah. Some scholars, however, maintain that releasing or ransoming are abrogated acts. As for the People of the Book and the Magians, these should be fought until they embrace

Islam or pay *Jizyah* in humiliation. Apart from these, the scholars disagree as to whether *Jizyah* is taken, but most of them are of the opinion that it is not to be taken.

It is also unanimously agreed by the Muslim scholars that any group belonging to Islam but refusing to adhere to one or more of its clear and established laws should be fought until religion is wholly for Allah. This could be clearly seen in Abu Bakr's campaign against those who refused to pay *Zakah.* It is also reported through many channels of Hadeeth transmission that the Prophet (ﷺ) ordered his companions to fight against the *Khawaarij.* It is therefore made clear by the Qur'an, the Sunnah and consensus of Muslim scholars that whoever steps outside the laws of Islam must be fought even if they pronounce the two attestations of faith (Shahadah). Fighting these people is obligatory after they have received the message of Islam. Fighting them becomes even more obligatory and confirmed if they start the fight first against Muslims.

Obligatory *Jihad* against the disbelievers and those who reject some of Islam's laws, such as the *Khawaarij* and those who refuse to pay *Zakah, is* either offensive or defensive. If of the former type, it is an obligation of collective duty *(Fard Kifaayah);* that is, if it is carried out by a group of believers, the rest of the community are exempt from it, and those who do discharge it reap the benefits of their sacrifices, as Allah (SWT) says (which means) :

"Not equal are those of the believers who sit [at home], except those who are disabled (by injury or are blind or lame) and those who strive hard and fight in the way of Allah with their wealth and their lives. Allah has preferred in grades those who strive hard and fight with their wealth and their lives above those who sit [at home]. Unto each Allah has promised good (Paradise), but Allah has preferred those who strive hard and fight in the Way of Allah above those who sit [at home] by a huge reward; degrees of higher grades from Him, and forgiveness and mercy. Allah is ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayat 95-96.]

But when the enemy wants to attack the Muslims, fighting becomes an obligation of individual duty *(Fard 'Ain),* that is, fighting becomes obligatory upon both those Muslims fought and all other Muslims wherever they may be in order to assist them against the common enemy. As Allah (SWT) says (which means):

"But if they seek your help in [the matter of] religion, then it is your duty to help them, except against a people between whom and yourselves there is a treaty." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 72.]

The Prophet (ﷺ) also commanded us to assist Muslims who are fought against, to the best of our ability, whether we have the means or not. In self-defense, no single individual is excused from sacrificing their most valuable possessions in the defense of Islam, its sanctity and the lives of its followers. This is exactly what the Muslims did when the enemies attacked them in the Battle of the Trench (Al-Khandaq). At that time, Allah did not grant any Muslim permission to abandon *Jihad* as He had done with regard to offensive *Jihad,* in which case people were divided into those who undertake it and those who sit [at home]. Allah chided all those who asked leave of the Prophet (ﷺ) to stay behind (which means):

"And some of them (even) sought permission of the Prophet, saying: Our Lands lie open (to the enemy). And they lay not open. They but wished to flee." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 13.]

This is a manifestation of the defence of religion, sanctity and Muslim lives. It is a 'forced fighting'. Offensive fighting is, however, 'volitional' and aims at making religion prevail and dismaying the enemy of Allah, as happened in the Battle of Tabuk and other battles.[99]

Jihad has become the answer to the open challenge facing the Muslims today: namely our choice to live in dignity or in humiliation. If we wish to live in dignity then we must commit ourselves to *Jihad* in the way of Allah. But if we choose to be humiliated as a result of forsaking *Jihad* then death becomes dearer to us than life. In fact, this represents the cross-roads at which those who work for Islam have stood. Some have hesitated, some deviated and turned their backs, while others have stood firm, honoured and assisted by Allah to go forth on His path. However, in making the choice to advance we must bear in mind the consequences and responsibilities of *Jihad.* We must make preparations for it as best we can, for we have no more time to waste.

Muslims have no choice but to unite under the banner of their faith, holding fast to the Book of Allah and the Sunnah of His Messenger, fortified by their true creed and supplied with provisions of piety and good deeds. We must prepare for a ceaseless war that will rage on until all *kufr* regimes crumble, all *Jahili* laws are swept away, our Caliphate is re-established and all our lands regained.

Then will we go forth with the sword in one hand and the Qur'an in the other, calling all Mankind to Islam. It is true that this will be a serious and hard task to carry out, but all our able men are now obliged to undertake it; otherwise we will all be guilty of neglecting all these obligations.

We are undoubtedly obliged to fight *Jihad* today. Anything vital for fulfilling this obligation is in itself an obligation. We are also obliged to prepare ourselves, arrange our ranks, promote our best, and unite under the banner of a single Muslim leader. So let us fight ***"...in the cause of Allah, and for those weak, ill-treated and oppressed among men, women, and children whose cry is: 'Our Lord! Rescue us out from this town whose people are oppressors; and raise for us from You one who will protect, and raise for us from You one who will help."***[100]

Let us fight,

"... until persecution is no more, and religion is wholly for Allah."[101]

Let us fight,

"Whoever fights in the Cause of Allah, and is killed or gets victory, We shall bestow on him a great reward."[102]

Let us fight,

"And if you are killed or die in the Way of Allah, forgiveness and mercy from Allah are far better than all that they amass (of worldly wealth, etc.)."[103]

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[99] Ibn Taymeeyah, Al-Fataawaa Al-Kubraa.

[100] Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 75.

[101] Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 39.

[102] Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 74.

[103] Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 157.

Let us fight,

"Think not of those who are killed in the Way of Allah as dead. Nay, they are alive, with their Lord, and they have provision."[104]

Let us fight,

"Let those [believers] who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter fight in the Cause of Allah."[105]

Let us fight,

"O you who believe! Shall I guide you to a commerce that will save you from a painful torment? That you believe in Allah and His Messenger [Muhammad (ﷺ)], and that you strive hard and fight in the Cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is better for you, if you but know."[106]

4. Working within the Framework of a Jama'ah

Before we embark on our discussion of the *Jama'ah,* it is perhaps important to recollect our objectives, the road leading to realizing them and the position of our enemies towards us. Reviewing this will facilitate our discussion of the role that the *Jama'ah is* meant to play and to understand the reasons for collective work.

As far as our aims and objectives are concerned, Allah commands us thus: ***"Establish the religion and be not divided therein."*** [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 13.]

We have divided our objectives into two sets: namely to bring people to the worship of their Lord and to establish a system of Caliphate that follows the example of the Prophet (ﷺ).

The road leading to the fulfillment of these objectives, and which we have committed ourselves to travel along, or, more precisely, which our Lord has made incumbent upon us to follow, consists of three obligations, which can either be of collective or personal duty. These obligations are *Da'wah, Hisbah* and *Jihad.*

A closer look will clearly reveal that this road with its three commitments is not even and well-paved and that walking on it requires immense efforts and sacrifices. We must endure these great hardships and grapple with our enemies on the way in order to achieve our ultimate destination.

We must never neglect to find out about the position of our enemies, decide their number and weaponry and find out their centres of concentration and the identity of their leaders. Our enemies are so many: the Christians, the Jews, the atheists, the idolaters, the cow worshippers, the fire-worshippers, the apostates, the hypocrites, our secular leaders and their associates who have altered the laws of Islam and the sects that claim to belong to Islam but do not adhere to its laws. Their weaponry also varies: they have at their disposal all the powers of the mass media,

[104] Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 169.
[105] Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 74.
[106] Surah As-Saff (61), Ayat 10-11.

educational systems, and the tools of cultural guidance and massive armies with weapons of mass destruction.

All these enemies with all their weapons are waiting to pounce on us the moment we take the first steps on the road. They will throw all their weight against us to drive us back and destroy us. They will never tire from fighting against us and against our faith, as Allah (SWT) says (which means) :

"And they will not cease fighting against you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 217.]

"They desire to put out the light of Allah with their mouths." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 32.]

Now let us ask ourselves the following questions. Can we travel alone along this road? Can we fulfil our legal obligations of *Da'wah, Hisbah* and *Jihad* by ourselves? Can we individually defeat our enemies who will undoubtedly start fighting us once we make the first step on the path? Can we achieve our objectives through individual efforts?

No sensible person could possibly answer any of these questions in the affirmative. There is no doubt that scattered individual efforts will not persist for any length of time; they will take a few steps forward but they will soon give up hope and leave the road as dangerous, the objective as distant and the enemy as strong. Anyone who wants to walk on this path from its beginning, in isolation from all those who started before him and those travelling alongside him, will certainly be doomed to failure and destruction. Scattered individual efforts are always wasted and fruitless.

Our faith, which is complete, all-embracing and final, has not overlooked this matter to leave its followers to undergo such an unpleasant experience. Indeed, it takes into account the treachery of the road that lies ahead, the immense difficulty of the obligations laid on the shoulders of its followers, the ferocity of the enemy and the nature of the confrontation between them and their opponents. The laws of Islam have provided us with the ideal answers to this challenge. It lays down the foundations on which we can construct a realistic Islamic movement capable of confronting the forces of *Jahiliyyah* and achieving its noble objectives.

It is our duty to adhere to the command of our religion and to follow its instructions if we are really serious and sincere in our efforts to achieve our objectives. Allah commands us thus (which means):

"And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah and do not separate." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 103.]

Commenting on this verse, Ibn Kathir said, *"Allah enjoined the faithful to adhere to unity and forbade them from disunity. Indeed, there are many Ahadeeth forbidding disunity and enjoining unity. "*

In his commentary of the same verse, Al-Qurtubee said, *"Ibn 'Abbas said to Sammak Al-Hanafi: 'O Al-Hanafi! You must observe Jama'ah (unity), for the past nations were destroyed as a result of their disunity. Have you not heard Allah (SWT) saying (which means):*

'And hold fast, all of you together, to the rope of Allah and do not separate'*?'"*

Al-Qurtubee also said, *"Imam Muslim narrates on the authority of Abu Hurairah that the Prophet (ﷺ) said,*

'Allah is pleased with three things from you, and detests three others. He is pleased that you worship Him alone, not associate anyone with Him in worship and that you hold fast to the rope of Allah and not to be divided. The three things he detests are futile gossip, skepticism and the wasting of money.'[107]

So, Allah made it obligatory on them [the Muslims] to adhere to His Book (the Qur'an) and to refer to it in times of disagreement. He also commanded us to observe unity and forbade disunity which led to the destruction of the People of the Book before us."

Al-Qurtubee also quotes Ibn Mas'ood as saying with regards to the same verse, *"[He orders them to observe] Jama'ah (unity). Allah (SWT) commands unity and forbids disunity, for disunity is destruction and unity is salvation."*

In fact, our faith commands us thus (which means) :

"Establish the religion and be not divided therein." [Surah Ash-Shura (42), Ayah 13.]

And,

"This is My straight path, so follow it. Follow not other ways, lest you be parted from His Way." [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 154.]

'Ali bin Abee Talib said, *"Do not part from one another, for unity is a mercy and disunity is torment."*

Ibn 'Abbas said regarding the above two verses: *"Allah, Most High, ordered the believers with Jama'ah and forbade them from discord and disunity."* Ibn Kathir mentioned similar statements from Mujahid and others. Our faith commands us thus (which means):

"And help you one another in righteousness and piety; but help not one another in sin and transgression." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 2.]

Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) commanded unity and harmony and forbade discord and disunity. They ordered us to help one another unto piety and righteousness and forbade us from helping one another unto sin and aggression."*

Our faith commands us (which means): *"Two are better than one, and three are better than two, and four are better than three. So stay together [in a Jama'ah]."* And, *"Satan is to man what a wolf is to sheep, and he attacks the stray ones. So avoid the lonely paths and adhere to the Jama'ah (unity)."*[108]

It also teaches us that (which means):

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[107] Muslim.
[108] Imam Ahmed.

"The believers, men and women, are awliyyaa' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors) of one another: they enjoin good and forbid evil." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 71.]

and,

"Whoever takes Allah, His Messenger, and those who believe as awliyyaa' (helpers, supporters, friends, protectors), then the party of Allah will be the victorious." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 56.]

Our faith teaches us that *Jama'ah* and collective work is the only translation into reality 'of Allah's and His Messenger's commandments to get united, to help one another to righteousness and piety and to hold fast to His religion. Indeed, *Jama'ah* is the true image of taking believers as awliyyaa'.

To engage in individual, haphazard work in preference to collective work simply means disobedience of Allah and His messenger. For by doing so we prefer disunity to unity, neglect co-operation with the believers to achieve righteousness and piety, and reject and disparage the taking of believers as awliyyaa'.

All these arguments provide sufficient reasons for adopting the method of collective work and choosing the *Jama'ah* as the best and only way to obey Allah and His Messenger t' in these matters. However, these are by no means the only reasons to do collective work. Indeed, there remains an important and decisive reason which our faith has not neglected to mention, namely the principle that 'what is vital for the fulfillment of an obligation is in itself an obligation'. There are many duties which we cannot carry out in accordance with Allah's instructions without collective effort.

To "establish religion" in fulfilment of Allah's command will undoubtedly lead us to enter an all-out confrontation with the enemies of Islam who wish to establish their *Jahiliyyah.* This confrontation, along with its concomitant obligations such as fighting against the secular rulers and those sects which refuse to implement certain Islamic rules, cannot be undertaken without organized collective work. So in view of the legal principle stated above, it is an obligation to observe collective work with all its necessary requirements, such as uniting and organizing our ranks, installing a Muslim leader, placing the appropriate skills in the appropriate places and acquiring the means of strength and influence.

Conversely, abandoning collective work means, in the first place, disobedience of the commands of Allah and His Messenger. It also means forsaking most of this religion's laws and obligations which we are supposed to establish. Islam today is established only through some ritual observations. Such vital fields, however, as economics, legislation, social dealings, government, legal punishment, wars and treaties, are all established by *Jahiliyyah.* To establish the religion of Islam in all these fields and domains entails, as we stated earlier on, an all-out confrontation with *Jahiliyyah,* on all fronts, using all the means, weapons and capabilities at our disposal. For our confrontation with *Jahiliyyah* to stand a chance of success we must be united, organize our ranks and hold fast to our religion. Without these requirements, the establishment of religion will never be realized. Muslims have aspirations 'that cannot materialize without consistent collective work which abides by the rules and regulations of *Shari'ah* and is organized through a movement. It is only in this way that we can translate our Plans into reality and thus achieve all our goals.

Perhaps, after all we have just mentioned, we have the right to disapprove of those who call for an isolationist approach, want to withdraw from the field of Islamic work and flee the field of confrontation. But what type of isolation do they seek and isolation from what? Do they want isolation from divine obligations and duties? From *Jihad, Hisbah* and *Da'wah?* Isolation from obligations of individual responsibility or those of collective responsibility which are neglected today even by those who can undertake them? Perhaps they want us to leave the land and the people in the hands of the secularists, to abandon the obligation of establishing the faith, to forget about Palestine, Andalusia and all the Muslim lands. We do not know as yet of any Muslim scholar who has issued this religious verdict. No-one has ever said that we should avoid collective work and confine ourselves to prayers, supplication and remembrance and abandon all our duties of educating the ignorant, admonishing the arrogant, enjoining good, preparing for *Jihad,* fighting our enemies, liberating our lands and establishing *Shari'ah.*

Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali writes, *"You should know that every person who confines himself to sitting in his home, wherever he may be, cannot be innocent of evil in this day and age. For by doing so, one neglects the [obligation] of guiding people, educating them and enjoining them to do good." Surprisingly* enough, Al-Ghazali wrote these words in his own time, when the Caliphate was established and *Shari'ah* implemented!

Ibn Al-Qayyim said, *"What good is there in a person who sees the sacred things of Allah being violated, His limits transgressed, His religion forsaken, the Sunnah of His Messenger (ﷺ) neglected, and yet he remains indifferent, with a 'cold heart' and silenced tongue, like a silent devil. Such people, besides being despised by Allah, have been afflicted by the worst disease, namely the death of their hearts. For the more the heart is alive and vibrant, the more its anger for the sake of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ) is felt, and the stronger and more complete its support for the Deen."* By Allah, Ibn Al-Qayyim was correct.

He also said, *"The standing in the rank and waging of Jihad for an hour of a brave, strong man, who is feared by the enemies of Islam, is better than his performing Hajj, fasting, giving charity and observing : voluntary acts of worship. By the same token, mixing with people, educating them and counseling by a knowledgeable scholar who knows the Sunnah, what is Halal and what is Haram and ways of good and evil, are better for him than withdrawing from social life and giving himself over solely to praying, reciting the Quran and remembering Allah."*

Ibn Al-Mubarak related on the authority of `Amir Ash-Sha'bee that some men left Kufa to withdraw from social life and indulge in worship. When `Abdullah bin Mas'ood heard of them, he went to see them. They were pleased to see him, but he said, *"What prompted you do this?"* They said, *"We liked to get away from the people to worship [Allah]."* He then said to them, "If *everyone else did what you are doing, who is going to fight the enemy? I will not leave until you return with me."* May Allah have mercy on Ibn Mas'ood. He said what he said at a time when *Jihad* was an obligation of collective responsibility *(Fard Kifaayah).* What would he have said today to those who seclude themselves from the world?

Besides, how could advocates of seclusion neglect the Hadeeth in which the Prophet (ﷺ), said, *"A group from my Ummah will continue to fight in the way of Allah,*

defeating their enemy, unconcerned about those who oppose them, until the Day of Judgement."[109]

Have these isolationists not read the *Hadeeth* in which the Prophet (ﷺ) prohibited one of his companions from seclusion saying, "Do *not do it. For the setting forth of one of you in the way of Allah (Jihad) is better than his prayer in his home for seventy years. Do you not yearn that Allah may forgive you and enter you in the Garden? Fight in the way of Allah, for whoever fights in the way of Allah for the time between the milking of a camel, is guaranteed to enter the Paradise."*[110]

As for those who adopt the isolationist approach, we can but send him a few verses of poetry which `Abdullah bin Al-Mubarak, the *Muhaddith* of Syria, had sent to his devout ascetic friend Al-Fudhayl bin 'Ayyaadh, in which he disapproved of his settling in the vicinity of Makkah and neglecting *Jihad,*

"O worshipper of the Two Holy Mosques, if only you could see us,

you would know that you are merely playing in your worship.

Whoever is dying his neck with tears [out of the fear of Allah],

[Should know that] our throats are being dyed with our blood.

Or he who tires his horse in falsehood

[Should realize that] our horses are fatigued on the 'day of adversity'.

The scent of perfume is for you, but for us, our perfume is

The dust of our horses' hooves and the more pleasant dust.

From our Prophet (ﷺ) came a statement that is true and cannot be denied.

The dust from a horse in the path of Allah that enters the nose of its rider cannot come together with the smoke of the Blazing Fire [of Hell].

This is the Book of Allah which speaks with the truth before us,

The martyr is not dead, and this cannot be denied."

5. A Jama'ah Regulated by the Shari'ah

The *Jama'ah* which intends to work for the religion of Allah must be committed to *Shari'ah* in all its aspects: in its objectives, creed, understanding and activities. We make special mention here of the necessity of the *Jama'ah* adhering in its activities to the dictates of the *Shari'ah* because of the importance of the matter. For it is loose attachment to and transgression of the edicts of *Shari'ah* that has hindered the progress of many present-day Islamic groups and which has led others to deviate from the right path, and yet others to make compromises with the disbelievers and incline towards them. In fact, Islamic work always needs *Shari'ah* to guide it.

Many of these groups have forgotten that they should work only by the means of Islam. They have broken free from the regulations of the *Shari'ah* as well as

[109] Bukhari.
[110] Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi and Ahmad.

transgressed its limits, thinking that by raising the banner of Islam and speaking in its name they are permitted to act as they please. Their whims, opinions and policies have stepped in to take the course of action, to the exclusion of *Shari'ah.* This has consequently given rise to the commission of obvious prohibitions and the neglect of known obligations in the name of the interest of Islamic work and movement, as though *Shari'ah* cannot meet the requirements of Islamic work and movement. Therefore, the Islamic movements have, for the most part, dissented from the teachings of Islam, transgressed its limits, have put (themselves) ***"forward before Allah and His Messenger,"***[111] and raised their voices ***"above the voice of Allah's Messenger,"***[112] thus giving proof of their complete ignorance, or pretension to be ignorant, of their religion.

In fact, our *Shari'ah,* with its rulings, commandments and prohibitions, in its totality and details, is capable of driving the Islamic work forward at a great pace and in no time, not even imagined by those who are active in the Islamic field, on condition that they should have themselves and their movement regulated by *Shari'ah,* in all matters, big and small. As for the movement to assume the role of 'guardian' for the *Shari'ah,* allowing things which it likes and ignoring those which it does not like, this is undoubtedly a new form of *Jahiliyyah* in disguise.

Indeed, it is Islam which deems collective work through a *Jama'ah,* an obligation of individual responsibility *(Fard 'Ain)* and therefore we should not contravene Islam in this regard. This *Jama'ah* should strictly adhere to the rules and regulations of Islam and not follow the personal opinions of those who are in charge of it. The responsibility for insuring the *Jama'ah's* strict adherence to the *Shari'ah* rests mostly on the shoulders of the venerable *Ulama* of our *Ummah* who are pious, wage *Jihad* for Allah, act in accordance with the saying of Al-Haqq (which means): ***"who deliver the message of Allah and fear Him, and fear none save Allah."***[113] This responsibility should not be assumed by those *Ulama* who seek worldly gains and serve oppressive, secularist rulers.

Indeed, the task assigned to the *Ulama* of this *Ummah is* pivotal and vital and no-one else can fulfill it except them. Their duty is to lead the Islamic movement in such a way as to keep up with current events in reality, to defiantly face challenges and never to renounce confrontation, while at the same time remaining in accord with *Shari'ah,* obeying its instructions and realising its objectives.

If the true *Ulama* neglect this duty which is theirs, the ignorant people and those who pretend to have religious knowledge will undoubtedly step in to take over. The *Ulama's* failure to participate actively and contribute amply in the leadership of the movement will surely lead to the movement remaining passive and confused before the various issues which arise. As a result of this, those in charge of the movement will be confused as to the rulings and judgments of the *Shari'ah* regarding these issues. The thousands of issues, circumstances and problems which the Islamic movement is facing today necessitate the intervention of men of knowledge to lead the way; otherwise, the procession will go astray. For *Jahiliyyah* does more harm than good.

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[111] Surah Al-Hujuraat (49), Ayah 1.

[112] Surah Al-Hujuraat (49), Ayah 2.

[113] Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 13.

Those who actively work for Islam should therefore realize the importance of this issue and give it their uttermost attention. They should know that the *Ulama* are heirs of the Prophets and they are best qualified to lead this *Ummah. So* let us give our support to the heirs of the Prophets. Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"Are those who know equal with those who know not? But only men of understanding will pay heed." [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 9.]

6. A Jama'ah which draws lessons from past experiences

Allah (SWT) says (which means): ***"So travel in the land and see what was the end of those who denied [the truth]."*** [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 36.]

History is a great school of knowledge for all those who want to learn. Islam constantly invites us to consider the history of preceding nations and learn from what befell them as a consequence of their disbelief in Allah (SWT) and obstinacy to follow His guidance,

"Such were the townships whose story We relate unto you. Their Messengers did indeed come to them with clear proofs, but they would not believe in what they had disbelieved before. Thus does Allah seal the hearts of the disbelievers." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 101.]

The history of our *Ummah is* replete with lessons that illuminate the road of the true believers who seek Allah's Bounty and Pleasure. The *Seerah* (biography) of our Prophet (ﷺ) represents the ideal example of how a Muslim ought to lead his life in all its aspects. His *Jihad* and that of his companions, and such Battles as Badr, Uhud and Al-Ahzaab which raged between Islam and the forces of *kufr,* are indeed immortal, and represent honourable pages that light the way for those who wish to follow in their footsteps.

Throughout the long, rich history of the Muslim *Ummah* great events took place: kingdoms and nations rose and fell, armies marched west and east conquering new lands and still the sun of Islam never set on the world, until forces of *kufr* represented by the Jews, the Christians and the atheists allied with one another and brought about the eventual fall of the Caliphate in 1924 and thus the disintegration of the *Ummah.*

While striving to re-establish the Islamic Caliphate, making it our prime objective, we must understand the progression of history and absorb its lessons to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit. We must, while progressing towards its great objective, absorb the experiences of Islamic movements, past and present, in order to benefit from their merits as long as they accord with the instructions of the *Shari'ah* and avoid repeating their mistakes. Studying the history of past and present movements will also help us to understand why these movements had no chance of success and what reasons led to their defeat. In this way, our beginning will not be similar to that of those who came before us; rather our point of departure will be the point where our predecessors stopped.

Some of the Islamic movements worthy of study are: The *Al-Wahhaabiyyah* movement which appeared in the Arabian Peninsula, *As-Sannusiyah* movement in

Libya, *Al-Mahdiyyah* movement in the Sudan,the *Muslim Brotherhood (Ikhwaan Al-Muslimoon),* as well as the movements of Islamic *Jihad* which are currently active throughout the world from the Philippines and Afghanistan in the East, through Syria and Egypt, to the Arab Maghreb and the Balkans in the West.

Part Six: Our Provisions

- ***Piety and knowledge.***
- ***Certainty and total reliance on Allah.***
- ***Gratefulness [to Allah] and patience.***
- ***Doing without the life of this world in preference to the Hereafter.***

Every traveller needs some provisions for his journey. The longer the way, the more arduous and greater the sacrifices required to complete it and the more provisions he requires.

What then of someone travelling towards Allah and the Hereafter? Someone who will end his journey either in Paradise or the Hell-Fire? What could we say of a traveller who starts his journey with trials and tribulations in this world, spending the remainder of his journey in a state of dust in his grave, only to end up between the Hands of his Lord? What provisions does such a person need to take with him? What kind of provisions will benefit and help him on his journey? And what provisions will take him to a place of safety and save him from what he fears and strives hard to avoid? Does he need wealth and children or prestige and power? By Allah, he needs none of these as provisions on the way towards Allah and the Hereafter. Indeed, such worldly means will be of no avail to him on the Day of Judgement, as Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"But as for him who is given his record in his left hand, he will say, 'O, would that I had not been given my record! Nor known what my reckoning was! O, would that [death] had made an end [of me]! My wealth has been of no avail to me. My power has perished from me."[Surah Al-Haaqqah (69), Ayat 25-28.]

"O Mankind! Keep your duty to your Lord and fear a Day when the parent will not be of any avail to the child, nor will the child at all be of any avail to the parent." [Surah Luqman (31), Ayah 33.]

"But when there comes as-Saakh-khah (the Day of Resurrection's second blowing of the Trumpet), on that day a man will flee from his brother, and [from] mother and his father, and [from] his wife and his children. Every man among them that day will have concern enough to make him indifferent [to others]." [Surah 'Abasa (80), Ayat 33-37.]

None of these provisions will avail us except that of *Taqwa* (fear of Allah),

"And take a provision (with you) for the journey; but the best provision is Taqwa (piety, righteousness, etc.)" [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 197.]

Knowledge is also our provision,

"It is only those have knowledge among His servants that fear Allah." [Surah Faatir (35), Ayah 28.]

Certainty is also our provision,

"And we made from among them (Children of Israel), leaders, giving guidance under Our command, when they persevered with patience and used to believe with certainty in Our Signs." [Surah As-Sajdah (32), Ayah 24.]

Putting trust in Allah is also our provision,

"And whoever puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is Allah for him." [Surah At-Talaq (65), Ayah 2.]

Gratitude is also our provision,

"Why should Allah punish you if you are grateful [to Him] and you believe (in Him)?" [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 147.]

Patience is also our provision,

"Allah is with those who patiently persevere." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 153.]

Zuhd is also our provision,

"Refrain from the world and Allah will love you, and refrain from what people possess and the people will love you."[114]

Preferring the Hereafter is also one of our provisions,

"And whoso desires the Hereafter and strives for it as it should be striven for, and he is a believer - these are the ones whose striving shall find favour [with Allah]." [Surah Al-`Israa, Ayah 19.]

Such are the provisions which are useful and suitable for our journey to Allah and the Hereafter. They are the right provisions which assist us to carry out the legal obligations that Allah has commanded us to fulfil in this life, avoid the prohibited and patiently endure hardships and afflictions. They are the right provisions that help defeat our enemies, achieve the means of material strength and help in inviting assistance from Allah. They are also the right provisions which assist in forming the distinctive Muslim personality; indeed, they are the proof of the correct formation of such a personality.

Today we face all the forces of *kufr* and inequity while we are in possession of so little in terms of number and means. Our enemies have at their disposal virtually all the means of material might. Also, while we barely find a safe place in which to take refuge, our enemies dominate the world and stand united against Islam,

"Verily, adh-Dhalimoon (the polytheists, wrongdoers, etc.) are awliyyaa' (protectors, helpers, etc.) to one another..." [Surah Al-Jaathiya (45), Ayah 19.]

So what is left for us?

"...But Allah is the Wali (Helper, Protector, etc.) of the righteous."

Indeed, He is the best Protector and Helper,

"For Allah is Best and the Most Abiding." [Surah Ta-Ha (20), Ayah 73.]

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[114] Ibn Maajah.

We have been commanded to make ready against our enemies all we can of power. But whatever preparations we make will, for the most part, be insignificant compared to those of our enemies. So how can we prevail?

In fact, we can prevail because they do not possess the same provisions as we have. Our provisions will be the instrument that bridges the wide gulf in capability between us and them, and provide us with ultimate victory.

We stand, despite our limited capabilities and our small number, armed with piety that will safeguard us against minor sins, let alone major ones, and will encourage us to perform voluntary acts of worship after the performance of the obligatory ones. The Prophet (ﷺ) says,

"Allah the Almighty has said, 'Whoever shows enmity to a Wali (friend) of Mine, I shall be at war with Him. My servant does not draw near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have imposed upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with voluntary acts of worship so that I love him. When I love him I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hands with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him; and were he to ask Me of refuge, I would surely grant him it.'"[115]

We also stand in the face of our enemies, armed with knowledge which will prevent us from going astray and enable us to worship our Lord in the manner most pleasing to Him. We stand assured of Allah's assistance and support for this religion. Certainty prompts us to put our trust in Allah, so that if we are afflicted by a calamity along the way, we endure it with a patience fair to see, and if good befalls us, we express our gratitude to Allah in a way suited to Him, the Giver and Bestower, Exalted is He. We sell our lives in exchange for the Hereafter, loving death as our enemies love life. How could we possibly be defeated after all this?

1. Taqwa (Piety)

"O you who believe! Fear Allah as He should be feared, and die not except in a state of Islam." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 102.]

Piety is an indispensable provision for the Muslim *Jama'ah.* Our *Jihad* and striving to establish the religion of Allah on this earth will undoubtedly fail without piety and all our work will be turned down by Him. The two sons of Adam (as) each offered a sacrifice to Allah, who accepted one and rejected the other. The reason was that:

"Verily, Allah accepts only from al-muttaqoon (the pious)."[116]

Piety made one of the two sacrifices worthy of Allah's pleasure and acceptance, while the other which was devoid of piety, was returned to its offerer unaccepted. The efforts of so many people, striving with words and deeds, are rejected because they do not emanate from the lamp of *Taqwa.*

[115] Bukhari, on the authority of Abu Hurairah.
[116] Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 27.

Furthermore, piety is a precondition for the success of our endeavours in this world and in the world to come. Moses (as) told his people, as the Qur'an says about him (which means),

"Pray for help from Allah, and be patient. Verily, the earth is Allah's. He gives it as a heritage to whom He will of His servants, and the [blessed] end is for al-muttaqoon." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 128.]

Victory and power in the land cannot be attained without *Taqwa,*

"Surely, the [good] end is for al-muttaqoon." [Surah Hud (11), Ayah 49.]

'Umar bin Al-Khattab wrote to Sa'd bin Abee Waqqas, the commander of the Muslim armies during the campaign against the Persians, "*I command you and your soldiers to observe Taqwa which is the best preparation against the enemy and the strongest weapon of war. I command you and your soldiers to be more on guard against sins than against the enemy, for the sins of [your] army should be feared more than their enemy. Indeed, Muslims only triumph by the sinning of their enemy against Allah, for otherwise we would not have the strength and advantage over them. Our numbers are not like their numbers, nor is our preparation like their preparation. If we equal them in sins, they will prevail over us through their physical strength. If we cannot defeat them through our piety, we will not defeat them through our strength."*

Allah's support for His servants and His assistance to them with the angels is conditional upon piety:

"Yes, if you hold on to patience and piety, and the enemy comes rushing at you, your Lord will help you with five thousand angels having marks [of distinction]." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 125.]

How true was 'Abdullah bin Rawaahah who said on the day of the Battle of Mu'tah, *"By Allah, we do not fight the people with the number of soldiers and preparation, but we fight them with this religion with which Allah has honoured us."*

There is a huge gulf between us and our enemies in terms of numbers, equipment and the various means of power, but Allah (SWT) has given us something with which to bridge this gap and prevail over them, despite our small number and meagre capabilities. He provides us with the means to achieve the greater triumph,

"O you who believe! If you obey Allah and fear Him, He will grant you a Furqan (criterion [to judge between right and wrong])." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 29.]

Muhammad bin Ishaq said, *"Furqan is distinction between the truth and falsehood, with which we recognise truth from falsehood, with which we act with the truth and avoid falsehood, and with which we support the truth and overcome falsehood."*

Ibn Kathir said, *"Whoever fears Allah by carrying out what He commands and abandoning what He forbids, Allah will help him distinguish between the truth and falsehood. This knowledge will induce his victory, safety and relief from the difficulties of this world and will also ensure his happiness and forgiveness of his sins on the Day of Judgement."*

Piety is the key to our salvation from the state of weakness, backwardness and humiliation in which our *Ummah* lives. It is the means by which, if we adopt faithfully, all the tools of success and victory will readily be at our disposal, and the causes of defeat and humiliation will vanish. It is piety which takes us by the hand, leads us to the Truth and makes us love it, succumb to it, work by it and for it, in sincere devotion to Allah. It guards us against deviation and guarantees us victory over enemies who are mightier than us in strength and greater than us in number.

It is piety which rescues us, by the Will of Allah, from every difficulty and distress. Indeed, Muslims experience many difficulties and hardships today when our enemies are against us!

"And whoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make a way for him to get out [from every difficulty]." [Surah At-Talaq (65), Ayah 2.]

"And whoever fears Allah and keeps his duty to Him, He will make his matter easy for him." [Surah At-Talaq (65), Ayah 4.]

It is piety which makes us adhere to the commands of Allah and His Messenger, though they might be arduous to obey. It is also piety which makes us committed to our *Jama'ah,* listening to and obeying our leaders in all good things.

For all the above, as well as other reasons, Allah (SWT) has commanded us to observe piety and make it our best provision:

"And take provision [with you] for the journey, but the best provision is Taqwa. So fear Me, O men of understanding." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 197.]

While every journey requires a particular provision, the journey towards Allah requires piety which, alone, is suitable for the journey. For ***"the best provision is Taqwa."*** Indeed, if we lose this provision, we will not be able to carry on our journey and we will certainly stop and meet with disappointment. How excellent was the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ) to one of his companions who was embarking on a journey, *"May Allah provide you with piety."*[117] He was, in other words, reminding him that *Taqwa is* a Muslim's provision for ever journey and endeavour in this life. Imam 'Ali once described *Taqwa* as follows, *"Taqwa means fearing Allah, the Almighty, acting in accordance with the Qur'an, contentment with whatever little we have, and preparing for the day of departure (death)."*

Al-'Irbadh bin Sariyah once said, *"The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) gave us a sermon by which our hearts were filled with fear and tears came to our eyes. We said, 'O Messenger of Allah, it is as though this is a farewell sermon.' He said, 'I counsel you to fear Allah (have Taqwa) and to give absolute obedience, even if a slave becomes your leader. Verily, he amongst you who lives [long] will see great controversy, so you must keep to my Sunnah and to the Sunnah of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Cling to them stubbornly. Beware of newly invented matters, for ever invented matter is an innovation (bid'ah), and every bid'ah is a going astray, and every going astray in the Hell-Fire."*[118]

Abu Saeed Al-Khudree said, *"I asked the Messenger of Allah to counsel me and he said, 'Observe Taqwa, for it is the peak of every matter.'"*

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[117] Tirmidhi and Ad-Darimi.

[118] Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi, who said that it was a *Hasan Sahih Hadeeth.*

It was the Prophet's (ﷺ) custom that, whenever he commissioned someone to lead a platoon of fighters, he would instruct him to observe *Taqwa* himself and with regards to the Muslims with him. It is also because of the paramount importance of piety that our meritorious predecessors used to exhort one another to it. Abu Bakr, prior to his demise, entrusted `Umar bin Al-Khattab with the Caliphate and gave him an all-inclusive counsel which started with the words, *"O 'Umar! Fear Allah."*

'Umar bin Al-Khattab wrote to his son 'Abdullah, saying, *"I counsel you to fear Allah, who protects those who fear Him, rewards those who lend unto Him, a goodly loan and gives more to those who are grateful. Direct your attention towards Taqwa, and make it the elucidation of your heart."*

But who exactly are the pious and what are their attributes?

Mu'adh bin Jabal said, *"On the Day of Judgement, it will be called out: 'Where are al-muttaqoon (the pious)?' The pious will then rise under the cover of Ar-Rahman who will not conceal Himself from them."* Mu'adh was then asked, *"And who are the pious?"* He replied, *"They are those who avoid shirk and the worship of idols."*

Hassan Al-Basri said, *"The pious are those who avoid what Allah has forbidden them and carry out what He has commanded them."*

Abu-Dardaa' said, *"Perfect piety is when the servant fears Allah so much that he eschews evil even, if it is an atom's weight, for fear of Him, and abandons some of the things he thinks are Halal for fear that they might be Haram. "*

Sufyan Ath-Thawree said, *"Al-muttaqoon are called as such because they have avoided that which is not avoided (by others)."* Maimoon bin Mahran said, *"A pious person is more severe in bringing himself to account than a miser is with his partner [in business]."*

Indeed, the pious are those who possess all the attributes of goodness and righteousness. The Prophet (ﷺ) rightly said, *"Fear Allah, for piety brings together all good."*

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said, *"Piety is right here,"* and he pointed to his breast three times.[119]

So how can we acquire this important provision and how can we feed our hearts with it?

'Umar bin 'Abdul-Aziz once wrote to a man, *"I counsel you to observe Taqwa, for Allah accepts nothing but Taqwa, shows mercy only on those who observe it and rewards only for it. This is so because those who preach it are many and those who observe it are few."*

So how could we possibly observe it? It is really a hard task to attain piety, but easy for those who go towards Allah with open hearts. The first step in this direction is to cleanse the heart of any falsehood, of anything other than Allah, so that nothing remains therein except Allah, obedience to Him, remembrance of Him, gratitude to Him, love for Him, fear of Him, and reliance upon Him. For the heart is like a vessel. Once filled with something it accepts nothing else until it is emptied of the first. By

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[119] Bukhari and Muslim.

the same token, if man serves anything or anyone other than Allah, there will be no place for Allah in his life until they are rooted out and his heart is purged. Those hearts that are filled with love for the life of the world are far away from Allah. Distant from Allah are also the hearts of those hearts which are filled with desires, those which associate others with Allah in worship and those that are sick with love for others than Allah. So, whoever wants that Allah be his Lord and Master and that his heart be filled with love, hope, fear and reliance directed towards Allah, must first cleanse his heart of any false gods and distance himself from all his desires and passions.

Some might ask, "But how can we achieve this?" The answer is through the 'awakening' mentioned in the verse (which means):

"Say [unto them, O Muhammad].I exhort you unto one thing only: that you awake, for Allah's sake, by twos and singly, and then reflect." [Surah Saba (34), Ayah 46.]

This devotion to Allah is made possible by the heart awakening to Him and contemplating His signs in the Qur'an and in the universe and all that is in it. By doing so the heart would find the verses of the Qur'an informing it that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah and proving to it that any deity other than Allah is false. For these deities:

"...possess neither hurt nor profit for themselves, and possess neither death nor life, nor power to raise the dead," [Surah Al-Furqan (25), Ayah 3.]

It will also find the entire universe testifying that the Creator is One and that He is All-Wise, All-Aware, All-Knowing, Most Kind and All-Mighty.

Only then does the heart learn that there is no god worthy of worship but Allah and that He alone is worthy of total obedience, constant remembrance and gratitude.

But is this knowledge enough for the heart to devote itself to. Allah so completely? Surely it is enough for the sound heart. But those hearts which have strayed and worshipped other than Allah for too long will learn that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah but will, at the same time, continue their devotion to their false gods, knowing full well that these are of no avail to them. So what is the medicine for these diseased hearts? The cure is that the servant should stop and reflect. He should think that the life of this world is ephemeral and that the Hereafter is everlasting. He should then ask himself which one is more deserving of his efforts and devotion. He must think of his remaining alone in his grave with nothing but his deeds for company. The Prophet (ﷺ) said,

"Three things follow the dead person to his grave, two of which return and one of which remains with him. His family, money and deeds accompany him [to the grave], then his family and wealth return, and his deeds stay with him."[120]

He should think about his standing all alone before his Lord,

"And truly you come to Us alone (without wealth, companions or anything else) as We created you the first time. You have left behind you all that which We had bestowed on you. We see not with you your intercessors whom you claimed to be partners with Allah. Now all relations between you

[120] Bukhari and Muslim.

and them have been cut off and all that you used to claim has vanished from you.” [Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 94.]

"There is none in the heavens and the earth but comes to Most Gracious [Allah] as a slave.” [Surah Maryam (19), Ayah 93.]

He should think about leaving the presence of his Lord either to the Hell-Fire forever, or to a Paradise which is as wide as the heavens and the earth and which no eye has seen, no ear has heard of and no-one has thought of.

When Allah wills good for His servant, He assists and guides him to this awakening which will cause the servant's heart to quickly surrender and return to its Creator. The servant prostrates in total submission to Him and never raises from this prostration until he meets his Lord, who will then reward him for the most excellent of his deeds and forgive his worst sins.

This is the way to purify the hearts. Only those hearts that are devoted purely to Allah are truly pious. It is a mistake to think that achieving piety and maintaining it is a job for the heart alone and that the body can by no means do that. In fact, our bodies have the greatest effect on the heart and must be prevented from committing acts of disobedience even though the self might incline to do so. Furthermore, they should be encouraged to carry out acts of obedience even when they are disliked by the self. By engaging in a mujahidah (struggle), the situation changes: Allah endears obedience to His servant and makes disobedience hateful to him,

"And those who wage Jihad in Our [Cause], We will certainly guide them to Our Paths (Islam). And verily, Allah is with those who do right." [Surah Al-'Ankabut (29), Ayah 69.]

2. Knowledge

"Say: ‘Are those who know equal to those who do not know?’" [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 9.]

"Indeed, Allah conferred a great favour on the believers when He sent among them a Messenger from among themselves, reciting unto them His verses (al-Qur'an) and purifying them, instructing them [in] the Book (al-Qur'an) and al-Hikmah (Wisdom and the Sunnah of the Prophet), while, before that, they had been in manifest error.” [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 164.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah* which strives to raise the word of Truth and carries out the instructions of Allah, enjoins good and forbids evil, fights to protect the Religion of Allah, strives hard to establish the Islamic Caliphate, and aims to bring people to the worship of their - Lord, is specially in need of knowledge to guide it and outline its course of action.

This Muslim *Jama'ah* of has inherited these duties from the Prophet (ﷺ) and should therefore take this bequest as a provision for the journey. The Prophet (ﷺ) said: *"The Prophets transfer neither dinar nor dirham by inheritance. They only*

transfer knowledge by inheritance. Therefore, he who acquires this [knowledge], receives an ample share."[121]

Mu'adh bin Jabal put it so eloquently when he said, *"Through it (knowledge), blood ties are preserved and through it Halal is distinguished from Haram. It is a leader and conduct is its follower. It is given to the fortunate and withheld from the unfortunate."*

If the Muslim *Jama'ah* wishes to work for the faith of Allah, it should seek knowledge of the Deen. It must learn the *Aqeedah* of its meritorious predecessors, lest it should go astray and become heretic. It should acquire this knowledge to understand its religion best, teach it to others and call to Islam through it,

"Say: this is my Way: I call unto Allah with sure knowledge, I and those who follow me." [Surah Yusuf (12), Ayah 108.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah* must learn how and when to enjoin good and forbid evil. It must learn how to wage *Jihad* and against whom it must be waged. It must learn about whom we should take as friends and whom we should we should take as enemies. If, however, the Muslim *Jama'ah* fails to learn these things, it will certainly experience defeat, loss, and misguidance, for he who worships [Allah] without knowledge is like a traveller taking the wrong road. Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbalee said, *"He who travels along a path without knowledge, thinking that it leads to Paradise, has indeed taken the most difficult of paths which will not take him to his destination, despite its difficulty."*

Knowledge is a necessity for those seeking Allah's Pleasure and success in the Hereafter. For such a person, the need for knowledge is greater than his need for food or drink. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"He who sets foot on a path in the quest of knowledge, Allah will facilitate for him the path to Paradise."*[122] Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbalee said on the explanation of this Hadeeth, *"Knowledge leads to Allah through the shortest and easiest paths. So, whoever sets foot on Allah's path and does not swerve from it will definitely reach Allah and Paradise through the shortest and easiest paths."*

For those who wish to be among the pious, knowledge is the road to piety. One of the Salaf said, *"How could one be pious if he does not know what things to avoid?"*

Ma'roof Al-Karkhi said, *"If you do not know how to fear Allah, You will certainly eat riba (usury)."*

Ibn Rajab Al-Hanbalee said, *"The essence of piety is that the servant should know first what to avoid and then avoids it."*

Those who want to be reliant on Allah must learn what reliance is, for otherwise they will omit to adopt the necessary means and tools of success and fall into error, while at the same time delude themselves that they are reliant on Allah, such as a man who goes out to fight without weapons, claiming to be relying on Allah's assistance.

[121] Ibn Maajah.
[122] Ibn Maajah.

Those who seek to be patient and enduring should take knowledge as their vehicle to this aim; otherwise, they will be humiliated, thinking that their suffering is a kind of endurance.

Knowledge is the guide to every deed, whether it is a deed of the heart, of the limbs or of the tongue. Indeed, knowledge is the 'door' of every deed; and Allah commands us in the Qur'an to seek knowledge. This is the reason why men of knowledge are accorded such high status and regarded as heirs of the Prophets,

"Say: 'Are those who know equal to those who do not know?'" [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 9.]

"It is only those who have knowledge among His slaves that fear Allah." [Surah Faatir (35), Ayah 28.]

It is for this reason that knowledge and the *Ulama* who possess it assume great importance in Islam to the extent that it has been said that a single *alim is* more formidable against the devil than a thousand devout persons. This is also the reason why Imam 'Ali bin Abee Talib divided people into three categories: an Allah-fearing *alim,* a learner seeking salvation and unruly masses who follow any call or banner.

Adherents of the Muslim *Jama'ah* who work for Islam can either be of the first type or the second, but woe to them if they are of the third.

The knowledge we need has been concentrated by the scholars into two areas: knowledge of Allah, and knowledge of His instructions.

The first type concerns knowledge of Allah's Names and Attributes. Such knowledge provides the Muslim with fear, humility, obedience and submission to Allah. It is the most honourable and highest type of knowledge because its subject is Allah (SWT). Many of our pious predecessors said, *"Knowledge is not a matter of many narrations, but it is a matter of fearing Allah".* Others said, *"Sufficient is knowledge which brings about fear of Allah."* Hudhaifah bin Al-Yamaan said, *"The first aspect which is lifted from knowledge is humility."*

The second type concerns knowledge of what is *Halal* (lawful), what is *Haram* (prohibited) and also the knowledge of such things as the various legal rulings and how to reach them. Every Muslim is, therefore, required to learn enough of this for his worship and social conduct to invite Allah's acceptance. He should learn what he needs to do to in order to carry out the acts of worship such as performing ablutions, *Salah* and fasting. Furthermore, every Muslim who has wealth should learn about what he is obliged to do with it with regard to *Zakah, Hajj* and *Jihad.* Merchants should learn which transactions are permissible and which are not. This is why 'Abdullah bin 'Umar said, *"Only those who have understanding of religion can sell in our markets."* Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal said, *"The knowledge a person must have is that which he has to acquire in order to perform his Salah and establish his faith."*

The second type of knowledge is an obligation of two types: obligation of individual responsibility *(Fard Ain)* which every Muslim is required to undertake to validate his worship, his dealings, and his belief; and an obligation of collective responsibility *(Fard Kifaayah)* which all those qualified to undertake it will be deemed sinners if they fail to do so. This type includes Hadeeth sciences, transmitters of the Hadeeth, inheritance and source methodology in Islamic jurisprudence (Usool al-Fiqh al-Islami).

So, what is the type of knowledge that the Muslim *Jama'ah* needs? And how much should it drink from its nourishing well?

All members of the *Jama'ah* are required to possess sufficient 'knowledge of Allah' to enable them to obey Him, undertake His commands and shun disobeying Him. They should compete with one another to acquire this knowledge, for those who know the most are the closest to Allah. Then they should acquire the knowledge whereby their *'Aqeedah,* as well as their worship and dealings with others, is correct and acceptable to Him. This is an obligation of individual responsibility, each in accordance with what he requires for his faith and worldly affairs.

Every member who is responsible for carrying out a given task should acquire the required knowledge so as to discharge his duty in the best possible manner. Those entrusted with the responsibility for the treasury, for example, should learn everything concerning the appropriate and acceptable sources of income and its ways of expenditure. Likewise, those charged with the task of *Hisbah* ought to learn the relevant knowledge relating to their duties.

In addition, there should be a group of people whose duty is to acquire the knowledge considered an obligation of collective responsibility, especially that which relates to the role played by the *Jama'ah* and its functions. These are entrusted with insuring that the *Jama'ah is* always regulated in its moves by the *Shari'ah.*

Above all, the *Jama'ah* must not admit in its ranks those scholars whose 'knowledge of Allah' is so little, because, despite their knowledge of what is forbidden, they persist in practising it and may even issue a verdict deeming the prohibited, permissible. They also know full well the obligations, but they abandon them and license others to forsake them.

These scholars who do not fear Allah and are devoid of piety will undoubtedly bring calamity to the *Jama'ah* and its activities. `Umar bin Al-Khattab rightly said, *"What I fear most for you is a hypocrite with a knowledgeable tongue."*

3. Certainty

Books of *Seerah* recount that upon his return from his `night journey and ascension to the highest heavens *(Al-Israa' wa-l-Mi'raj),* the Prophet (ﷺ) informed the disbelievers of Qur'aish about the experience he had had that night. They did not believe him and rushed to Abu Bakr, hoping that once they told him of this 'extraordinary' story, he would desist from following and supporting the Prophet. Abu Bakr simply said to them, *"If he has told you this, then he has spoken the truth".*

Also, after the revelation of the verses (which mean),

"The Romans have been defeated in the nearer land (Syria, Iraq, Jordan and Palestine), and they, after their defeat, will soon be victorious, in a few years." [Surah Ar-Rum (30), Ayat 2-4.]

The disbelievers rushed to Abu Bakr and said, *"Your friend [meaning the Prophet (ﷺ)] claims that the Romans will be defeated."* Abu Bakr said, *"He has*

spoken the truth." He even made a bet with them that this prophecy would be fulfilled. This was before betting was prohibited by Islam.

This is the certainty with which the Muslim *Jama'ah* must be equipped. It is certainty concerning what the Almighty has told us and what He has promised,

"Allah's promise is the truth, and whose words can be truer than those of Allah? (Of course, none)." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 122.]

"Allah [has made] His promise, and Allah fails not His promise." [Surah Ar-Rum (30), Ayah 6.]

It is the certainty that whatever the Prophet (ﷺ) said is the absolute truth. Indeed, this is the certainty that we lack. Certainty that Allah (SWT) defends those who have faith. Certainty that this religion will inevitably prevail. Certainty that there is ease after hardship. Certainty that trials and tribulations precede victory. Certainty that victory will be granted to those truthful and patient servants who strive hard for Allah's sake, no matter how small their number may be. Certainty that no-one gives or causes himself or anyone else harm, good, life, death or resurrection except Allah (SWT).

Indeed, there is a big difference between a movement in possession of such absolute certainty and one without it. It is as wide as the gulf between life and death. A movement without certainty is like a body without life. The movement imbued with certainty is a steady, confident movement which stands the test of trials and tribulations.

The faithful and the hypocrites stood shoulder to shoulder in the Battle of the Trench (Al-Khandaq) and together they heard the prophecy of the Prophet (ﷺ) that the Muslims would conquer the Persian and Roman empires. The hypocrites did not believe this promise, while the faithful were certain that it was true and took it for granted that it would be fulfilled. The hypocrites abandoned the faithful, saying (which means),

"Allah and His Messenger promised us nothing but delusions!"[123]

while the faithful stood firm, certain of the promise of Allah and His Messenger, saying (which means),

"This is what Allah and His Messenger promised us, and Allah and His Messenger spoke the truth." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 22.]

If the Muslim *Jama'ah* lacks a high degree of certainty, its actions and words will be like those of the hypocrites.

It saddens us deeply to hear the words of those with weak faith and those with diseased hearts spread in the field of the Islamic work and being transmitted by some of those who work for Islam today. This is happening as a result of the lack of certainty that the promise of Allah and His Messenger will be fulfilled. They do not believe that the weak few will prevail, repeating the same words of the hypocrites (which means),

"Grant me leave (to be exempted from Jihad) and put me not into trial." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 49.]

[123] Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 22.

"March not forth in the heat." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 81.]

"Truly, our homes lie open [to the enemy]." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 13.]

"Our possessions and our families occupied us, so ask forgiveness for us." [Surah Al-Fath (48), Ayah 11.]

"There is no stand [possible] for you [against the enemy attack!], therefore go back." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 13.]

Despite all these discouraging words, the faithful, however, stand firm in faith, certain of Allah's victory, repeating the believers' words (which mean),

"How many a small party has triumphed over a large party by Allah's command! And Allah is with the steadfast." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 249.]

They also repeat the words of Moses (as) (which mean),

"By no means! My Lord is with me! He will direct me aright." [Surah Ash-Shu'ara' (26), Ayah 62.]

They also repeat the Hadeeth of the Prophet (ﷺ) who said, *"Allah drew the ends of the world near one another for my sake and I have seen its eastern and western ends. The dominion of my Ummah will reach those ends which have been drawn near for me."*[124]

Indeed, we pin our hope on this small party of truthful believers who, equipped with certainty of Allah's promise, will turn a deaf ear to those who try their best in an effort to discourage them and sow weakness and fear in their hearts. We are in need of a high degree of certainty, because the *Jahili* people are stronger in number and weaponry and more fierce. We must believe that Allah is with us, that He is Mightier and more vengeful, that He is omnipotent, that He assists His truthful servants and carries them to victory, makes His faith prevail and defeats all the sects ranged against it. We cannot work for Islam if we do not believe in this, neither can we practise *Jihad* without moving forward.

"And We made from among them leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, when they were patient and used to believe in Our signs." [Surah As-Sajdah (32), Ayah 24.]

4. Total Reliance On Allah

Once certainty is firmly rooted in the heart, it bears the fruit of true and sincere reliance on Allah. Therefore, none of those people with weak faith and those with diseased hearts would have the smallest share of reliance, for they have lost its direct source, namely firm belief in Allah and His promise.

Such people always try to frustrate the believers and hold them back from moving forward. They do not believe that their heroic achievements are reached by mere human beings. They see them fight, despite their small number and meagre equipment, and say about them (which means),

[124] Muslim.

"These people are deceived by their religion..." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 49.]

They do not realise that they have in fact put their trust in Allah and relied completely on Him,

"...But whoever puts his trust in Allah, then surely, Allah is All-Mighty, All-Wise."

They see their small number and say to them

"Verily, people have mustered against you, so fear them..." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 173.]

This discouraging remark serves only to increase the faith of the faithful and increase their level of certainty and confidence in Allah's promise. This certainty enables them to rely more on Allah and march on to the very end,

"...but this [only] increased their faith, and they said, `Sufficient for us is Allah, and an excellent Guardian is He."

We therefore repeat with the true believers, "Sufficient for us is Allah." ***"And whoever puts his, trust in Allah, sufficient is [Allah] for him."*** [Surah At-Talaq (65), Ayah 3.]

"Is not Allah sufficient for His servant?" [Surah Az-Zumar (39), Ayah 36.]

"But if they turn away, say, 'Allah is sufficient for me. There is no god but He. In Him do I put my trust, and He is the Lord of the Mighty Throne." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 129.]

"O Prophet! Allah is sufficient for you and for the believers who follow you." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 64.]

"So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving creature, but He has grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the straight Path (the truth)." [Surah Hud (11), Ayat 55-56.]

"I put my trust in Allah. So devise your plot, you and your partners, and let not your plot be in doubt for you. Then pass your sentence on me and give me no respite." [Surah Yunus (10), Ayah 71.]

"In Allah do we put our trust. Our Lord! Make us not a trial for those who practise oppression; and deliver us by Your mercy from the disbelieving folk." [Surah Yunus (10), Ayat 85-86.]

"No reason have we why we should not put our trust in Allah. Indeed He has guided us our ways. We shall certainly bear with patience all the hurt you cause us, and in Allah [alone] let those who trust, put their trust." [Surah Ibrahim (14), Ayat 12.]

Books of *Seerah* inform us that upon the *Sahabah's* return from the Battle of Uhud, The Prophet (ﷺ) called them to arms. He instructed Biial to tell the people that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) instructed them to seek their enemies and that only those who had fought the previous day should join in the fight. Usaid bin Hudhair, who had sustained nine wounds the previous day, obeyed the orders promptly and without

the slightest hesitation or rest to nurse his wounds. Forty injured fighters from the tribe of Banu Salamah joined the Prophet (ﷺ) seeking the enemy who had only the previous day defeated Prophet in Battle. They set forth, weaker and fewer than they had been the day before, armed only with faith in Allah and complete reliance on Him. The Qur'an records this incident thus (which means),

"Those who answered [the call of] Allah and the Messenger, even after being wounded; for those of them who did good deeds and feared Allah, there is a great reward. Those unto whom the people said, 'Verily, the people have mustered against you, so fear them.' But this [only] increased their faith, and they said, 'Sufficient is Allah for us, and an Excellent Guardian is He.' So they returned with Grace and Bounty from Allah, while no evil had touched them; and they followed the good pleasure of Allah, and Allah is the Lord of great bounty." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayat 172-174.]

This is the type of reliance we need as equipment for the Islamic movement. Allah (SWT) commands His Messenger (ﷺ) to put his trust in Him and entirely rely on him,

"And put your trust in the Ever Living One who dies not." [Surah Al-Furqan (25), Ayah 58.]

"And put your trust in the All-Mighty, the Most Merciful." [Surah Ash-Shu'ara' (26), Ayah 217.]

This divine instruction was directed to the Prophet (ﷺ), and to those in his *Ummah* who are on the path of manifest truth. Those who undertake to carry the message inherited from the Prophet (ﷺ),

"So put your trust in Allah; surely you are on manifest truth." [Surah An-Naml ((27), Ayah 79.]

Muslims have entered many Battles with a small number of poorly equipped fighters, but they went forth with no hesitation, for they were certain that Allah (SWT) would carry His soldiers to victory and establish His religion. This certainty gave them a perfect reliance on Allah and true dependence upon Him. They entered those Battles with certainty of Allah's promise of victory and carried the day. The following Qur'anic verse clearly shows that the reason behind the Muslims' defeat in the first stage of the Battle of Hunain was due to their pride because of their great number and the absence of total reliance on Allah,

"Surely, Allah had helped you on many a Battlefield, and on the Day of Hunain, when your great numbers made you proud, but they availed you naught; and the earth, with [all] its vastness, became straitened for you, [and] then you turned your backs retreating." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 25.]

One of the Sahabah, realising the great number of Muslims, could not help giving vent to boastful utterance, *"We will not be defeated today owing to a small number."* While expecting a sure victory, defeat struck and 1200 Muslim fighters fled the battlefield. Then, only eighty fighters gathered around the Prophet (ﷺ) and snatched victory from the tribe of Hawazin.

The Muslims learned a great lesson on the Day of Hunain, namely the importance of true reliance on Allah. They learned that only reliance on Allah, not on numbers and weapons, will carry them to victory. They learned that once reliance on

Allah is lost, Muslims will abandon *Jihad* and will sit back and shy away from fighting for Allah, repeating what the Children of Israel said to Moses (as) (which means),

"O Moses! We shall never enter it (this Holy Land) as long as they are there. So go you and your Lord and fight you two, while we sit here." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 24.]

They refused to fight, putting forward the following excuse (which means),

"O Moses! In it (this Holy Land) are a people of great strength, and we shall never enter it until they leave it." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 22.]

They declined to enter the Holy Land (Palestine) that Allah had assigned to them, but only two men of those who feared Allah and on whom Allah bestowed His Grace said (which means),

"Assault them through the gate, for when you are in, victory will be yours, and put your trust in Allah if you are believers indeed." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 23.]

They abandoned true reliance on Allah and were consequently denied victory and were apportioned humiliation in this life and punishment in the Hereafter,

"[Allah] said, `Therefore it (the Holy Land) is forbidden to them for forty years; in distraction they will wander through the land. So be not sorrowful over these people who are Fasiqoon (rebellious and disobedient to Allah)." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 26.]

Indeed, when reliance upon Allah is lacking, everything else will be lacking, and nothing will remain but humiliation and lowliness in this life and the Hereafter. When reliance upon Allah is missing, we become overwhelmed by Satan who then subjugates us to his control,

"When you recite the Qur'an, seek refuge with Allah from Satan the rejected. Surely he has no power over those who believe and who put their trust in their Lord." [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayat 98-99.]

Apart from those who believe and put their trust in Allah, all others are the *awliyyaa'* of Satan (those who obey and follow him),

"His (Satan's) power is only over those who obey and follow him, and those who join partners with Allah." [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 100.]

"It is only Satan who frightens his awliyyaa' (those who obey and follow him); so fear them not but fear Me, if you are believers." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 174.]

When reliance on Allah is lost, a servant's resolve, will and courage become replaced with cowardice, weakness, despair and fear. He also loses the love for Allah (SWT),

"Allah loves those who put their trust in Him." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 159.]

As a result of this the servant also loses true faith,

"[True] believers are those whose hearts tremble when [the Name of] Allah is mentioned, and when His verses are recited to them it increases their faith, and who put their trust in their Lord." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 2.]

"And in Allah [alone] let the believers put their trust." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 160.]

"And put your trust in Allah if you are believers indeed." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 23.]

Saeed bin Jubair said, *"Reliance upon Allah is total faith."* Wahb bin Munabbih said, *"Reliance upon Allah represents the utmost degree [of faith]."*

Indeed, true worship cannot be undertaken without total reliance on Allah (SWT). This is the reason why Allah (SWT) mentions them together in many a verse of the Qur'an,

"And to Allah belongs the Ghaib (unseen) of the heavens and the earth, and to Him return all affairs (for decision]. So worship Him and put your trust in Him." [Surah Hud (11), Ayah 123.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah will* only be able to play its role with a sufficient degree of trust in Allah and reliance upon Him. The *Jahiliyyah* surrounding it today possesses more weapons, greater numbers and more material wealth. If the Muslim *Jama'ah* does not put its trust on Allah in the prescribed manner, then surely it will not have the courage to take one single step in the way of Allah. While, on the other hand, if it puts its trust in Allah, excels in this reliance upon Him with total sincerity, it will undoubtedly be able to defy the entire world, east and west and say what Prophet Hud (as) said to his own people,

"So plot against me, all of you, and give me no respite. I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord! There is not a moving creature, but He has grasp of its forelock. Verily, my Lord is on the straight Path (the truth)." [Surah Hud (11), Ayat 55-56.]

How beautiful was the answer of Hud (as)!

"I put my trust in Allah, my Lord and your Lord!"

He is my Lord as well as yours. How could I not rely on Him when He is capable of protecting me from you and giving me victory over you, in spite of your superior numbers and strength, for ***"There is not a moving creature, but He has grasp of its forelock."***

It is appropriate to note here however that employing permissible means and methods does not impinge on the excellence and acceptability of reliance on Allah and trust in Him. For putting one's trust in Allah reflects the true reliance of the heart on Allah alone. When the servant's heart is sincerely and totally reliant upon Allah alone, employing legally acceptable ways and means does not do any harm to the servant, as long as his heart is not completely attached to them to achieve his aims. Conversely, those who do not utilise the appropriate ways and means and claim that they put their trust in Allah are in fact sinners. Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"And make ready against them all you can of power, including steeds of war..." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 60.]

Making preparations against the enemy is a legal means and a Divine command. Whoever abandons it and goes out to *Jihad* without it, claiming that he has put his trust upon Allah, has in fact committed a sin. Allah (SWT) commands the believers thus (which means),

"O you who believe! Take your precautions." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 71.]

Indeed, He commands them to carry weapons while praying on the Battlefield for fear of surprise attacks by the enemy. Ash-Shafi'ee deems carrying weapons in these circumstances compulsory (or wajib). No-one could possibly claim that they will succeed while abandoning the legal ways and means and depending solely on their reliance on Allah. In fact, we have a good example in the Prophet (ﷺ). The Prophet (ﷺ) used to adopt the necessary means of precaution when the circumstances required. He used to protect himself behind shields during combat; he hid in the cave during his flight from Makkah; he said on the Day of Al-Ahzaab (the Confederates), *"I need someone to [spy on the enemy] and bring us their news."* He also said to Nu'aim bin Mas'ood, *"Try to deceive them (the enemy) if you can, for war is, in fact, deception."* He also said, *"Who will stay up to guard us tonight [against the enemy]?"* He once saw a Bedouin entering the mosque to perform *Salah,* saying, *"I put my trust in Allah,"* after having left his camel untied outside the mosque, *"Tie it, then rely (on Allah)."* Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"Verily you have in the Messenger of Allah an excellent example to follow." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 21.]

5. Gratitude

The servant's life is a fluctuation between afflictions which he patiently endures and blessings for which he is grateful to His Lord. This is the reason why many of our predecessors used to say, *"Faith is divided into two: gratitude and endurance."* The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"The condition of a believer is a wonder, it is all good. Only the believer enjoys this situation. When he enjoys good fortune, he thanks Allah and this benefits him. When he undergoes afflictions, he patiently endures it and this is also good for him."*[125] ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab once said, *"If gratitude and endurance were two camels, I would not mind which of the two I mounted."* Both gratitude and endurance are provisions for the Muslim on his journey towards his Lord. This was why the following verse has been repeated many times in the Qur'an,

"Surely, therein are signs for ever patient [and] thankful person." [Surah Ibrahim (14), Ayah 5.]

Furthermore, the Qur'an has divided people into two groups. The first denied Allah's benevolence and the second recognised it and thanked Him for it. Allah (SWT) says (which means):

"Verily, We showed him the way, whether he be grateful or ungrateful." [Surah Al-Insan (76), Ayah 3.]

[125] Muslim.

Gratitude is the reason for which Allah (SWT) has created man. The Qur'an says (which means):

"It is Allah who brought you forth from the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing; and He gave you hearing and sight and hearts that you may give thanks [to Him]." [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 78.]

If the Muslim *Jama'ah* seeks to achieve the pleasure of its Lord, its members must be among the grateful. It is its duty to teach them how to thank Allah for His benevolence and caution them against ungratefulness to their Lord, for such ingratitude will only bring His wrath upon them.

The firmness and perseverance of the Muslim Jama'ah in its adherence to the truth greatly depends on the gratitude of its members to Allah,

"Muhammad is no more than a Messenger, and [indeed] many Messengers have passed away before him. If he died or is killed, will you then turn back on your heels [as disbelievers]? And he who turns back on his heels, not the least harm will he do to Allah, and Allah will give reward to those who are grateful." [Surah Ale-Imran (3). Ayah 144.]

Allah (SWT) had instructed Moses (as) to take the religion with firmness and be grateful,

"O Moses, I have chosen you above men by My Messages and by My speaking [to you], so hold that which I have given you and be of the grateful." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 144.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah,* therefore, should pass on the same instruction to all its members. It should also teach them that Allah (SWT) tests His servants with good fortunes as well as with afflictions,

"And we shall make a trial of you with evil and with good." [Surah Al-Anbiyaa (21), Ayah 35.]

Allah (SWT) can readily open the flood gates of good fortune and wealth and inundate a servant with them. The servant will then either be helped by Allah (SWT) to remain steadfast. This will enable him to be of those who are grateful, who give what is legally due from them and acknowledge His benevolence. Alternatively he will rejoice in the world and its fleeting pleasures, forgetting the source of his good fortune, only to destroy himself by turning the blessing into a curse. He has indeed spoken the truth the one who said, "If you *continue to enjoy His benevolence while persisting in disobeying Him, then be careful because you are going to be punished gradually from directions which you do not perceive."*

Therefore, the Muslim *Jama'ah* should thank Allah (SWT) for His benevolence; otherwise, they will either lose it or it will continue in the form of a veiled affliction and, a testing enticement. If the *Jama'ah* sees its supporters growing in number and its *Da'wah* spreading and its knowledge increasing, it is gratitude which will perpetuate these blessings and help it receive more of them,

"And [remember] when you Lord proclaimed: `If you give thanks (by accepting faith and worshipping none but Allah], I will give you more (of My bounty), but if you are thankless (i. e. disbelievers), verily! My punishment is indeed severe." [Surah Ibrahim (14), Ayah 7.]

This was why the *Ulama* called gratitude *Al-Hafidh* (the maintainer) and *Al-Jalib* (the bringer) because it maintains the favours that one already has and brings others that are missing.

'Umar bin 'Abdul-'Aziz once said, *"Secure Allah's blessings by expressing gratitude [to Allah]."* Hassan Al-Basri said, *"When Allah bestows His favours upon a people, He asks for their gratitude. If they offer their thanks [to Him], He is able to increase their good fortune, but if they deny His favours, He is able to turn these favours of His into torment and affliction."*

Someone however may ask, "What do we mean by gratitude?" Is it a few words that one utters with one's tongue when one receives some of Allah's favours or does it mean something else?

The answer to this question is that the type of gratitude we are talking about is wider in meaning and more complete and comprehensive than this. It expands to include all the actions, utterances and conditions of the servant. The gratitude that we seek as a provision for us consists primarily of three things:

a. Gratitude of the tongue:

This means that the servant constantly praises Allah (SWT) with his tongue, thanks Him and recounts His blessings, favours and his own failure to express sufficient gratitude for them. Sulaiman said, *"Remembering Allah's blessings with one's tongue increases one's love for Him."*

b. Gratitude of the heart:

This manifests itself in the heart's constant recognition of Allah's blessings, its constant witnessing of His favours and its admitting of its own shortcomings in expressing gratitude for them.

c. Gratitude of the deeds:

This means making use of every blessing in a manner pleasing to Allah (SWT) alone,

"Work you, O family of David, with thanks." [Surah Saba (34), Ayah 13.]

Abu Haazim said, *"Every blessings that does not bring a servant closer to his Lord is in fact an affliction."*

The Muslim *Jama'ah,* therefore, should teach its members to thank Allah (SWT) for His favours by the tongue, the heart and the limbs. The Qur'an tells us about the Messenger Sulaiman (as) who said,

"This is by the grace of my Lord! -- To test me whether I am grateful or ungrateful! And whoever is grateful, truly, his gratitude is for [the good of] his ownself, and whoever is ungrateful, (he is ungrateful only for the loss of his ownself]. Certainly! My Lord is free of all wants, Bountiful." [Surah An-Naml (27), Ayah 40.]

We warn them strongly against allowing the continuous favours of their Lord from distracting them from their path, or from causing them to neglect saying the truth or carrying out *Jihad* in the way of Allah under the pretext of fear of losing these blessings, be they money or any other worldly gains, for blessings survive through gratitude and vanish by ingratitude.

6. Endurance

Any group of people who want to work for Islam must have their share and provision of endurance. Otherwise, they should leave this path to those who are more deserved of it, namely the truthful and patient believers.

In his biography of the Prophet (ﷺ), Ibn Kathir wrote, " *Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) spent ten years in Makkah, preaching to the people in their homes and in public gatherings and saying to them,*

'Who would shelter me and support me until I convey the Message of Allah, and [such a person] will receive the [reward of) *Paradise.' But he did not find anyone to shelter and support him, until the Ansaar (or the helpers) believed him and embraced Islam. Seventy-two of them came to meet him at a place known as Al-'Aqabah. The Prophet (ﷺ) promised them Paradise if they accepted his conditions. The youngest of them, As'ad bin Zurarah, stood up and said, 'Slow down, O people of Yathrib*[126]*. We did not tire our camels [on the way here] for him without knowing that he is the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Supporting him today will be in defiance of all the Arabs, it will result in the killing of your best men and the blow of swords upon you. Either you endure this, in which case take his offer and expect your reward from Allah, or if you are unsure of yourselves and afraid, in which case abandon him to his fate. So tell him your choice now, for either way he will vouch for you before Allah. ' They said, `Stand aside O As'ad! By Allah, we will never leave this allegiance to him, nor will we cancel it.'"*

The Muslim *Jama'ah* that wishes to support this faith and aspires after Paradise by doing so must have sufficient endurance to enable it to fulfil this commitment, assume the responsibility and confront the enemies. If, however, it does not know what endurance is, cannot stand what it entails and has no intention to exercise it, it must admit to its failings and step aside. Doing so might excuse it before Allah and is better for Islam than going forth carrying the banner and then soon turning on its heels, drooping the banner, only to cause great tumult and oppression in the land.

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said, *"And know that victory comes with endurance."*[127] So whoever wants victory must show patience and endurance. Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"And the fair promise of your Lord was fulfilled for the Children of Israel because they had patience and constancy." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 137.]

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[126] *Yathrib* was the name of the city which later came to known as *Al-Madeenah.*
[127] Tirmidhi.

"And We made from among them (the children of Israel), leaders, giving guidance under Our Command, so long as they persevered with patience and continued to have faith in Our signs." [Surah As-Sajdah (32), Ayah 24.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah,* therefore, must teach endurance to its members, train them and cloak them with it. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"He who tries to endure is assisted by Allah in his endeavour."* The *Jama'ah* must teach its members that endurance is a vehicle that must be alighted in order for them to attain the honour and success that are the dream and aspiration of the Muslim *Ummah.* It must also teach them that endurance is the conduit to all the degrees and stations of faith. Those who cannot endure will not achieve anywhere. Whoever wants to acquire some knowledge must patiently learn and memorise. Whoever aspires to the higher stations of piety will not achieve this aim without patience and endurance. Likewise, those who wish to rid themselves of sinful habits and conduct and cleanse their hearts and limbs, need patience and endurance to carry them through this process. Indeed, patience and endurance is the key to all good and the light of all guidance. Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"As for those who wage Jihad in Our Cause, We will surely guide them to Our Paths (i. e. Allah's religion). And verily, Allah is with those who do right." [Surah Al-'Ankabut (29), Ayah 69.]

Furthermore, maintaining any of the stations thus achieved requires additional endurance. Those who cease to strive and abandon endurance will be stripped of their gains, their status will be reduced and their progress reversed.

The need for patience and endurance is especially important for those who work in the cause of Allah. Preachers need patient perseverance so as not to lose hope when they see that no-one has responded to their call. They also need to endure any reaction to their activities that might be harmful to them. Educationalists need patient perseverance to deal with the mistakes and inattention of their charges. The leaders need it to lead those who are not inclined to obedience. Those who undertake enjoining good and forbidding evil need it to I endure harm. And those who undertake *Jihad* are without doubt most in need for endurance in order to keep up the struggle under all conditions and in all circumstances,

"Fighting [Jihad] is ordained upon you though you dislike it." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 216.]

Endurance is more needed today than ever before. We live with our *Da'wah* in countries controlled by our enemies whom we aim to remove and replace their rule with that of our *Shari'ah.* They will frequently attack us and seek to destroy us, and without endurance they will undoubtedly succeed in uprooting our *Da'wah* and wiping us off the face of this earth.

Endurance is not what many people today think it is, namely not speaking up for the truth and making compromises with falsehood. This is in fact no more than humiliation, degradation and disgrace, and has nothing to do with endurance. The endurance which our Shari'ah commands us to observe is of three categories.

a. Endurance in obeying Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ):

While the self inclines to comfort and inaction, religious obligations entail a degree of hardship that varies from one commission to the next. *Jihad,* for instance,

is more onerous than *Hisbah;* fasting is more onerous than making ablutions (wudu'); making wudu' with cold water in winter is harder than making it in summer. The degree of effort also varies from one individual to the other: those who are closer to their homes and families find emigration extremely taxing; and those with a hardened heart find prayers laborious, but *Jihad* remains the most exacting of absolutely all acts of worship. This is the reason why some said, as the Qur'an recounts (which means),

"Our Lord! Why have You ordered for us fighting? Would that You had granted us respite for a short period?" [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 77.]

This means that every Muslim needs endurance to compel his self into obedience, for patience is needed before performing any act of obedience, to bring the self to start it and be sincere in devoting it to Allah. It is also needed while doing the act to make the self see it through in the best possible way. It is also needed after completion of the act to prevent the heart from admiring the act of obedience and the tongue from boastfully talking about it.

b. Endurance in avoiding the disobedience of Allah and His Messenger (ﷺ):

This task is more difficult and demanding. For the human self, as the Qur'an said, is inclined to evil and wishes for it, and Satan entices and encourages the servant to commit the sin. Those who habitually indulge in sinful deeds advocate them and invite the faithful to join in, while society does not frown upon vice nor criticise the sinful. To the contrary, it sometimes praises the sinful because of the general corruption in which it wallows. So how can the limbs give succumb to the call of disobedience? Indeed, it is endurance which prevents the limbs from committing the sin. We definitely need the type of patience and endurance showed by Prophet Yusuf when he resisted the advances of Al-Aziz's wife, saying (which means),

"Verily, he who fears Allah with obedience to Him and is patient, then surely, Allah makes not the reward of those who do right to be lost." [Surah Yusuf (12), Ayah 90.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah is* in need of teaching this type of patience and endurance to its members, for we will surely be defeated if we are disobedient. ‘Umar bin Al-Khattab spoke the truth in his instructions to the army commander, Sa'd bin Abee Waqqas when he said to him, *"I command you and your soldiers to observe Taqwa which is the best preparation against the enemy and the strongest weapon of war. I command you and your soldiers to be more on guard against sins than against the enemy, for the sins of [your] army should be feared more than the enemy. Indeed, Muslims only triumph by the sinning of their enemy against Allah, for otherwise we would not have the strength and advantage over them. Our numbers are no match for them and our preparation do not compare. If we equal them in sins, they will prevail over us through their physical strength. If we cannot defeat them through our piety, we will not defeat them through our strength."* He also said. *"And do not say that our enemy is more evil than we are, and that Allah will not send them against us even if we sin. For so many are those against whom Allah sent a people who are more evil than them, as happened with the Jews when Allah* (SWT) *sent against them the disbelievers from amongst the Magians who entered the very innermost parts of their homes, and it was a promise completely fulfilled."*

The Muslim *Jama'ah* also needs to teach its members how to patiently endure and persevere in their resistance to the inequity and oppression of people, and how to detest and abhor this evil quality. For if they do not learn to dissociate themselves from injustice, those of them who might, in the future, be in positions of power and responsibility might then succumb to the temptation of oppressing others.

Another great vice and abhorrent act of disobedience which members of the Muslim *Jama'ah* must avoid is the love of leadership and influence, for so often has the struggle over leadership split the Muslim community and weakened its resolve.

c. Enduring trials and tribulations:

It is necessary that every Muslim must exercise this type of endurance, for otherwise he will rebel against the Divine Destiny, thus committing a major sin,

"Do people think that they will be left alone because they say, 'We believe', and that they will not be tested? And We indeed tested those who were before them. And Allah will certainly make fit] known [the truth of] those who are true, and will certainly make [it] known [the falsehood of] those who are liars [although Allah knows all that before putting them to test]." [Surah Al-'Ankabut (29), Ayah 2-3.]

These tests are important for separating between the good and the bad, and casting the bad away from the ranks of the caravan; the caravan of the people of truth and endurance.

Prevailing in this life is no easy task, for it implies the carrying of the burden of ruling the people by the tenets of this religion of Islam. ' This is why the laws that Allah established in the universe stipulates that only those entitled to occupy the positions of leadership should be allowed to govern. Trials and tribulations are, therefore, indispensable to distinguish the wicked from the good. Those who survive these tests are those worthy of authority and power,

"Allah will not leave the believers in the state in which you are now, until He distinguishes the wicked from the good." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 179.]

"In order that Allah may distinguish the wicked (disbelievers, polytheists, evil-doers) from the good (the believers), put the wicked one on another, heap them together, and cast them into Hell." [Surah Al-Anfal (8), Ayah 37.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah* must preach endurance to its members if it is to deserve power. Day and night it must preach to them what Moses used to preach to his people (which means),

"Seek help in Allah and be patient. Verily, the earth is Allah's. He gives it as a heritage to Whom He will of His servants, and the [blessed] end is (best) for the righteous." [Surah Al-A'raaf (7), Ayah 128.]

The Muslim *Jama'ah* must teach them thus,

"Or think you that you will enter Paradise without such [trials] as came to those who passed away before you? They were afflicted with severe poverty and ailments and were so shaken that even the Messenger and those

who believed along with him said, `When [will come] the help of Allah?' Yes! Certainly, the help of Allah is near!" [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 214.]

It must rear them to be true men, so that when the testing times come, they say what true men say (which means),

"This is what Allah and His Messenger had promised us, and Allah and His Messenger had spoken the truth." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 22.]

Only such people are deemed qualified to carry the trust of this faith. Their enemies will soon be discharged as fire discharges impurities from smelted metal.

Patiently enduring hardships and calamities require the following:

1. To restrain the heart from rebelling against and complaining about the fate that Allah has ordained and to strive to achieve the station of acceptance and rejoicing in whatever fate brings them.

2. To stop the tongue from showing fright, or uttering what is forbidden, and to strive to achieve the higher station of saying what Allah has instructed us to say,

"Innaa lil-laahi wa innaa ilaihi raaji'oon (To Allah we belong, and to Him is our return). [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 156.]

3. To restrain the hands from committing acts of disobedience, such as slapping the cheeks and tearing the clothes, as such actions reflect the lack of one's pleasure with Allah's destiny.

This is the type of endurance which is legally commendable, and how excellent this provision is!

"And Allah loves the patient." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 146.]

7. Doing without the life of this world in preference for the Hereafter

Allah (SWT) says (which means):

"Whatever is with you will be exhausted, and whatever is with Allah [of good deeds] will remain." [Surah An-Nahl (16), Ayah 96.]

"And the life of this world is but amusement and play! Verily, the home in the Hereafter, that is the life indeed, if they but knew." [Surah Al-'Ankabut (29), Ayah 64.]

"The life of this world is only the enjoyment of deception." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 185.]

"Say: 'Short is the enjoyment of this world. The Hereafter is [far] better for him who fears Allah, and you shall not be dealt with unjustly in the very least.'"[Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 77.]

"Nay, you prefer the life of this world; but the Hereafter is better and more lasting." [Surah Al-A'la (87), Ayat 16-17.]

The Qur'an is replete with verses which tell us to do without the life of this world and its fleeting, short-lived pleasures and which encourage us to work for the Hereafter, which is better and more lasting.

Abstaining from the transitory pleasures of this life and preferring the Hereafter are by no means inseparable, for only those who forsake the pleasures of this world long for the Hereafter. Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"To eschew [the pleasures of this]* life *is [in fact] to forsake what is of no benefit to the Hereafter."*

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"By Allah, the* life *of this world, compared to that in the Hereafter, is but like someone who puts his finger in the sea, so let him see what it brings out. "*[128]

He also said, *"The most truthful word ever uttered by a poet is that in which [the poet] Labeed says, 'Verily, everything apart from Allah is but falsehood'."*[129]

And, *"What have I to do with this world! I am no more in this world than a traveller who sought the shade of a tree then left it and continued [his journey]. "*[130]

And, *"If this world had the value of a mosquito's wing in the sight of Allah, no disbeliever would have had a drink of water from it."*[131]

And, *"Eschew the life of this world and Allah will love you."*[132]

The Qur'an and the Sunnah both encourage people to eschew this evanescent life and long for the everlasting bliss of the Hereafter. Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"The description of Paradise which the righteous are promised is that in it are rivers of water, the taste and smell of which are not changed; rivers of milk of which the taste never changes; rivers of wine, a joy to those who drink; and rivers of honey pure and clear. In it there are for them all kinds of fruits; and forgiveness from their Lord." [Surah Muhammad (47), Ayah 15.]

"[It will be said to the true believers]. My worshippers! No fear shall be on you this Day, nor shall you grieve, [you] who believed in Our Signs and were Muslims. Enter Paradise, you and your wives, in happiness. Trays of gold and cups will be passed round them, [there will be] therein all that the one's inner-selves could desire, all that the eyes could delight in, and therein will you abide forever. And this is the Paradise which you have been made to inherit because of your [good] deeds which you used to do [in the life of the world]. Therein for you will be fruits in plenty, of which you will eat [as you desire]." [Surah Az-Zukhruf (43), Ayat 68-73.]

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[128] Muslim and Tirmidhi.

[129] Bukhari, Muslim and Tirmidhi.

[130] Tirmidhi and Ibn Maajah.

[131] Tirmidhi.

[132] Ibn Maajah.

"Verily, al-muttaqoon (the pious and righteous) will be in the midst of Gardens and Rivers (paradise). In a seat of truth (Paradise), near the Omnipotent King (Allah, the All-Blessed, the Most High, the Owner of Majesty and Honour)." [Surah Al-Qamar (54), Ayat 54-55.]

"Some faces, that Day, will beam (in brightness and beauty) - looking at their Lord." [Surah Al-Qiyaamah (75), Ayat 22-23.]

[Other] faces, that Day, will be joyful, pleased with their striving [for their good deeds which they did in this world, along with the true faith of Islamic monotheism]. In a High Garden (Paradise), where they shall hear no harmful speech nor falsehood; therein will be a running spring; therein will be thrones [of dignity] raised high, and cups set at hand, and cushions set in rows, and rich carpets [all] spread out." [Surah Al-Ghaashiyah (88), Ayat 8-16.]

The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"You will see your Lord with your own eyes, just as you see the moon, never tiring of seeing Him."*[133]

He also said, *"The space taken up in the Hereafter by something as little as the whip of one of you is better than the whole of this earth and what is on it."*[134]

He also said, *"The smallest distance from Paradise is better than all the land over which the sun rises and sets."*[135]

The life of this world, therefore, is not a place of abode for a Muslim. It is rather a place of testing and trials. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"This world is the prison of a believer and the paradise of a disbeliever."*[136]

Indeed a Muslim has another abode, of which he is aware and for which he longs. He wants no more of this life than the provisions of good works necessary for completing the journey to his true home and that of Adam (as) before him. A journey towards Paradise, the width of which is as the width of the Heavens and the Earth. And if this life, with its pleasures and joys, stands as an obstacle on the road to Paradise, the believer will step over it by eschewing it and emptying the heart of any desire for it.

Az-Zuhd is to abandon all that is of no benefit in the Hereafter. It is therefore of utmost importance to forsake this life, which is bound to stand as a barrier between us and the Hereafter. Imam Ahmad said, *"Eschewing worldly pleasures (Az-Zuhd) is to shorten the hopes."*

It has also been said that *Az-Zuhd is* belittling the world and wiping affection for it from the heart.

Ibn Al-Qayyim said, *"Those who possess knowledge are in accord that the eschewing of the world means the departure of the heart from the abode of this world to that of the Hereafter."*

He also said, *"Desiring the Hereafter can only be achieved by eschewing life of this world; and eschewing life of this world could only be achieved after taking two correct looks. The first is to look at the shortness of life, its quick disappearance and*

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[133] Bukhari and Muslim.
[134] Bukhari.
[135] Bukhari.
[136] Muslim.

vileness. The second is to look at the Hereafter, its inevitability, eternity, constancy, the excellence and honour of its pleasures and joys, and the difference between it and what is here in this life. Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"But the Hereafter is better and more lasting." [Surah Al-A'la (87), Ayah 17.]

Ibn Al-Qayyim also said, *"The servant's love for this life and his acceptance of it is proportionately related to his slowness and prevarication in obeying Allah and seeking the Hereafter."* How true are Ibn Al-Qayyim's words! This is why we have said that eschewing the worldly pleasures and seeking success in the Hereafter are important provisions for a Muslim who seeks to serve his religion, a provision without which there could be no sacrifice or selfless offering of the self required for the victory and superiority of Islam.

Once this provision is lacking, all efforts come to an end. The Qur'an has chided those believers who have taken pleasure in this life, saying (which means),

"O you who believe! What is the matter with you, that, when you are asked to march forth in the Cause of Allah (Jihad), you cling heavily to the earth? Do you prefer the life of this world to the Hereafter? But little is the enjoyment of the life of this world, as compared with the Hereafter." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 38.]

Then Allah promised them the severest punishment if they neglect this duty, saying (which means),

"If you march not forth, He will punish you with a painful torment and will replace you by another people, and you cannot harm Him at all, and Allah is Able to do all things." [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 39.]

Love for the life of this world, the attachment of the heart to it and the striving of the limbs for its sake all deter the servant to fight *Jihad* in the way of Allah. On the other hand, selling this life for the Hereafter is the catalyst for fighting in the way of Allah,

"Let those fight in the cause of Allah who sell the life of this world for the Hereafter." [Surah An-Nisa (4), Ayah 74.]

Indeed, it is the selling of this life for the Hereafter which makes one disdain all the harm one might suffer for the sake of Allah, ***"So decree whatever you desire to decree, for you can only decree (regarding) the life of this world."*** [Surah Ta-Ha (20), Ayah 72.]

It is the selling of this life for the Hereafter which enticed Anas bin Nadhir to fight bravely in the Battle of Uhud until he sustained over eighty injuries, before finally falling as a martyr in the way of Allah. He sensed the winds of Paradise near Uhud, so he rushed towards it and Allah honoured him with martyrdom before anyone else.

It is the forsaking of life of this world in preference to the , Hereafter which filled the heart of 'Umair bin Al-Hamam when he heard the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ), saying on the day of the Battle of Badr, *"Rise to a Paradise the width whereof is as the width of the heavens and the Earth."* He said, *"O Messenger of Allah, is Paradise as wide as the heavens and the Earth?"* He (ﷺ) replied *"Yes."* To which he said: "Excellent! Excellent!". So he (ﷺ) said: *"What induced you to say 'Excellent!*

Excellent!'", he said *"O Messenger of Allah, I hope to be of its inhabitants."* The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"You shall be of them!"* 'Umair then produced some dates and started eating them, then he said, "If I were to live for as long as it would take me to eat these dates, it would be too long a life." He threw the dates to one side and then fought until he was killed.

This is the type of men that we lack today. It is the only type capable of working for Islam. We will never be able to be like these men in their courage, daring and sacrifice unless we become like them in their forsaking of this life in preference to the Hereafter. Books of Hadeeth and *Seerah* are replete with shining examples of such personalities who have sold this world for the Hereafter. We can only acquire their qualities of bravery, boldness and selfless sacrifice when we follow in their footsteps regarding their eschewing of this world. We will surely fail, however, if we wish to fight *Jihad* and strive hard for the cause of this religion without employing the ways and means to achieve such a goal and without severing the material ties that hold us down to the earth.

What we mean by eschewing worldly pleasures *(Az-Zuhd) is* not the forbidding of the permissible and lawful, such as money, food and marriage. Nor does it mean lowering our heads, keeping low profiles and insisting on assuming inferior appearances. The type of *Az-Zuhd* which we mean is represented in three points:

1. Forsaking what is forbidden

This is an obligation of individual responsibility *(Fard Ain)* for every single Muslim.

2. Eschewing undesirable things and the peripheral aspects of the legally acceptable things

This type of *Az-Zuhd is* commendable and necessary for members of the Muslim *Jama'ah* if they wish to prevail in this life. We have little time for such peripherals, besides the fact that they will distract us from firmly adhering to and working for our faith.

3. Eschewing life in general by `having it in the hands' and not making it a preoccupation of the heart

If worldly gains disappear after having enjoyed them, one is not saddened by the loss, nor does one rejoice in making such gains after long having been deprived of them.

Part Seven: Our Walaa' (Loyalty)

Our Walaa' (loyalty) are directed to Allah (SWT), His Messenger (ﷺ) and the Believers.

"Allah is the Wali (Protector, Guardian, Supporter) of those who believe. He brings them out from darkness into light." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 257.]

"Verily, my Wali (Protector, Guardian, Supporter) is Allah, who revealed the Book (the Qur'an) and He protects (supports and helps) the righteous." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 196.]

"That is because Allah is the Mawla (Lord, Master, Helper, Protector) of those who believe." [Surah Muhammad (47), Ayah 11.]

"Say: 'Shall I take as a Wali (Protector, Guardian, Supporter) any other than Allah, the Creator of the Heavens and the earth? And it is He Who feeds but is not fed.'"[Surah Al-An'am (6), Ayah 14.]

Allah is the Protector of the faithful. It is He who creates and gives sustenance. He gives life and causes death. He guides to the Truth and gives victory to its people. He accepts repentance and relieves hardship. He accepts the smallest good works and rewards their doer and forgives much error and sin. He gives the believing servants assurance and support in their graves in order to supply the correct answers to the questions of the two Angels[137]. He assures them on the day when all of creation will tremble with fear: The Day of Judgement. He will admit the believers into Paradise when the rest of people who fall into the Hell-Fire. So how can we not seek Allah's protection? To whom else could we turn if He deserted us and what destruction would befall us if He left us to fend for ourselves for a single instant? We can but stand in humble supplication between the Hands of our Lord, asking Him as Prophet Joseph (as) had done (which means),

"You are my Wali (Protector, Guardian, Supporter, etc.) in this world and in the Hereafter. Cause me to die as a Muslim and join me with the righteous." [Surah Yusuf (12), Ayah 101.]

Indeed, this is the correct starting point. To uproot all loyalty and allegiance from the heart except loyalty and allegiance to Allah (SWT) alone. As the Prophet (ﷺ) is the Messenger who conveyed the words of his Lord. Allah linked obedience to Him with obedience to the Prophet (ﷺ) in forty verses of the Qur'an. He linked love for Him with love for His Messenger (ﷺ) and that he (ﷺ) is more deserved of our hearts and sacrifices than our own selves, as Allah (SWT) says (which means),

"The Prophet is closer to the believers than their own selves." [Surah Al-Ahzaab (33), Ayah 6.]

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[137] It has been authentically related through a number of transmitters that the dead are questioned in their graves upon burial by two angels called *Munkar* and *Nakeer.* These two angels ask the dead the following questions: "Who is *your Lord?"*, *"What is your religion?"* and *"What do you say about the man who was sent to you (meaning Muhammad (ﷺ))?"*. Only the righteous will be able to answer these questions correctly with the help of *Allah* (SWT). *Allah* knows best.

We must hasten to give *Walaa'* (allegiance and loyalty) to the Prophet (ﷺ) and love him more than we love our own selves. How can we not do this when he (ﷺ) takes us by the hand into Paradise when our selves attempt to entice us away from it? It is the Prophet (ﷺ) who shields us from the Hell-Fire when our selves virtually attempt to push us into it. This was why the Prophet (ﷺ) instructed `Umar bin Al-Khattab to love him more than he loved himself.

Our loyalty is to Allah, the Benefactor, the Guide to the Straight Path and to His Messenger who conveyed His Guidance to us:

"Say: If your fathers, your sons, your brother, your wives, your kindred; the wealth that you have gained; the commerce in which you fear a decline; and the dwellings in which you delight, are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger, and waging Jihad in His Cause, then wait until Allah brings about His Decision (torment). And Allah guides not the people who are Fasiqoon (rebellious, disobedient to Allah).'" [Surah At-Taubah (9), Ayah 24.]

Every loyalty and love, apart from those reserved for Allah and His Messenger, are uprooted from the heart. The servant puts his love for Allah and the Prophet (ﷺ) above any other affection and he stands waiting for the instructions from his Lord and his Messenger:

"Verily, your Wali (Protector, Guardian, Supporter) is Allah, His Messenger and the believers." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 55.]

"As whoever takes Allah, His Messenger and those who have believed, as awliyyaa' (protectors, supporters), then the party of Allah will be the victorious." [Surah Al-Ma'idah (5), Ayah 56.]

"The believers are nothing else than brothers." [Surah Al-Hujuraat (49), Ayah 10.]

Allah instructed the believers to protect, love, support and assist one another, that is, in other words, to be *awliyyaa'* of one another. They stand together like a solid structure; their feelings, thoughts, principles, aims, *'Aqeedah,* methods, traditions and habits united. The believers are one group and one sect, with only the love and loyalty for Allah and His Messenger in their hearts.

This is the unifying tie and real bond. All other ties other than that of *'Aqeedah,* be it a tie of blood and kinship, homeland and country, tribe and folk, colour and language are *Jahili* ties. All these are bonds of ignorance that should be placed under the feet of Islam.

Islam has abolished all these loyalties and bound all the Muslims together with the greatest of ties. No Arab is favoured over a non-Arab, no fair skinned Muslim is superior to a black Muslim, except by the degree of piety they have. The believers alone direct their loyalty and allegiance to Allah, His Messenger and all the believers who came before them,

"And those who came after them say: `Our Lord! Forgive us and our brethren who preceded us in Faith, and put not in our hearts any hatred against those who have believed. Our Lord! You are indeed full of Kindness, most Merciful." [Surah Al-Hashr (59), Ayah 10.]

The Muslims also stand alone to direct their loyalty to those who will come after them. All the false ties disappear and only faith and loyalty to Allah and the Prophet (ﷺ) remain to hold them together. The source of their faith is one, their method of receiving it is the same, their criteria for judging all things are identical. In fact their structure has been made fairly solid.

If any Muslim is weakened, his brethren strengthen him; if any of them slip, his brethren help him up; if any excel, his brethren support him. This loyalty gives Muslims the greatest strength; it gives them the support of Allah, His love, assistance and protection. It gives them strength and brings about solidarity. Their enemies. realise the dangers this unity poses to them, but it remains impossible to penetrate their ranks and destroy this sacred bond. The faithful, therefore, must be on guard. Our only true strength is Allah and His Messenger. Our only real bond is faith. If we neglect this bond, Allah will abandon us and we will be scattered like dry leaves in the wind, divided by colour, race, language, nationality and political inclination. The Prophet (ﷺ) said, *"The strongest bonds of faith are loyalty to Allah and animosity to His enemies, love for Allah and abhorrence of what He dislikes."* The degree of a servant's faith determines the degree of loyalty he has towards Allah and the Prophet (ﷺ).

Part Eight: Our 'Adaa' (Animosity)

Our 'Adaa' (animosity) is against adh-Dhalimoon (disbelievers, polytheists, wrong-doers)

Our animosity is against *Adh-Dhalimoon,* or those who practise *Adh-Dhulm. Adh-Dhulm is of* two types:

1. Dhulm akbar, which is considered to be *kufr* or disbelief.

2. Dhulm asghar, which is considered an act of disobedience committed by Muslim sinners.

As for the disbelievers, they receive from us no less than total hatred and enmity, which they reciprocate in turn,

"Hatred has already appeared from their mouths, but what their hearts conceal is far worse." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 118.]

"And they will never cease fighting you until they turn you back from your religion if they can." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 217.]

"They intend to put out the Light of Allah (the religion of Islam) with their mouths." [Surah As-Saff (61), Ayah 8.]

"Never will the Jews and the Christians be pleased with you unless you follow their religion." [Surah Al-Baqarah (2), Ayah 120.]

"Let not the believers take the disbelievers as awliyyaa' (friends, supporters, helpers) instead of the believers." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 28.]

"You will not find any people who believe in Allah and the Last Day, making friendship with those who oppose Allah and His Messenger, even though they were their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their kindred [people]." [Surah Al-Mujaadilah (58), Ayah 22.]

Commenting on this verse, Ibn Kathir said, ***"even though they were their fathers"*** *refers to Abu `Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah when he killed his father in the Battle of Badr.* ***"Or their sons"*** *refers to Abu Bakr As-Siddique who almost killed his own son, 'Abdur Rahman, on the same day.* ***"Or their brothers"*** *concerns Mus'ab bin 'Umair who killed his brother, 'Ubaid bin 'Umair, again in the Battle of Badr.* ***"Or their kindred [people]"*** *refers to 'Umar bin Al-Khattab who killed a relative of his on the same day. It also refers to Hamza and `Ali who killed 'Utbah, Shaibah and Al-Waleed bin 'Utbah, and Allah knows best.'*

Islam sets out the position of the party of Allah as opposed to the party of Satan. It determines the position a Muslim should take against the disbelievers, namely hatred, animosity and roughness, and nothing else other than that. There should be no inclination towards the disbelievers, nor should there be any compromises with them,

"And incline not towards those who do wrong, lest the Fire should touch you." [Surah Hud (11), Ayah 113.]

"They wish that you should compromise [in religion out of courtesy] with them, so they [too] would compromise with you." [Surah Al-Qalam (68), Ayah 9.]

Islam considers both inclination towards the disbelievers and making compromises with them forbidden acts. *Al-Walaa'* or loyalty takes two forms: expressed and hidden. Hidden loyalty to the disbelievers (that is with the heart) is deemed *kufr akbar,* or major disbelief which definitely takes one out of the fold of Islam, whether or not one expresses it openly. As for the open and expressed loyalty to the disbelievers, this could either be an act of *kufr* or a major or minor act of disobedience in accordance with the judgement of *Shari'ah* in each individual case.

Al-Qurtubee said, *"He who frequently sees the secrets of the Muslims and draws them to the attention of the enemy by informing about them, is not regarded as a kafir if his action is intended for worldly gains. This is exactly what happened to Hatib bin Abee Balta'ah who did so in order to obtain support without the intention of becoming an apostate."* The incident which Al-Qurtubee mentioned provides ample evidence that hatred and animosity against the disbelievers is the right attitude we must hold towards them.

"We have rejected you, and there has started between us and you, hostility and hatred forever until you believe in Allah alone." [Surah Al-Mumtahinah (60), Ayah 4.]

But how about the Muslims who commits a lesser act of Dhulm, such as the oppressive and the heretic Muslim? Should we love them because of their Islam or hate them for their sins? Should we extend our protection and loyalty to them, or express animosity?

Ibn Taymeeyah said, *"Allah has sent the Messenger and revealed the Book, so that all the religion becomes wholly for Allah alone. Therefore, love should be for Him and His obedient servants, and hatred for His enemies. The honour to His loyal servants and humiliation and degradation to His enemies. The reward for the faithful and all the punishment for His enemies. If, however, a man possesses both the attributes of good and evil; of decency and vileness; of obedience and rebellion; of Sunnah and bid'ah; he deserves protection and reward commensurate with what good there is in him, and merits, animosity and punishment in accordance with the evil he harbours. This is the principle upon which the followers of Ahl-us-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah agree. Only the Khawaarij and Mu'tazalah sects and their followers oppose this opinion. These [misguided] sects categorise people as those who deserve only reward or punishment, but not both."*

Part Nine: Our Gathering

Our gathering is for one single purpose, with one single 'Aqeedah, and under one single intellectual flag.

In our discussion of the *Jama'ah,* we explained that it is impossible to achieve the objectives of Islamic work without collective effort which is regulated by the *Shari'ah.* We also mentioned that the Islamic movement cannot fulfil many of the legal obligations without adopting a collective approach. In fact, our *Shari'ah* does not neglect this point. It states that whatever is vital for the fulfilment of a religious obligation becomes an obligation in its own right. It also obliges Muslims to co-operate in executing good deeds, in their piety and holding fast unto the common 'cord of Allah' (Islam). We also concluded that collective work is an obligation of individual responsibility *(Fard Ain)* that must not be rejected or neglected by any Muslim.

Joint effort is, therefore, a necessity for Islamic activism. It enables it to secure and maintain the means of strength, otherwise our efforts would be scattered and our mettle considerably weakened. But, we must ask ourselves whether any kind of collectivism is suitable for the concentration of our energy. In other words, are there forms of collectivism that would reduce our strength and introduce elements of weakness into our ranks? Are their groups or types of people which it would be beneficial for the Muslim *Jama'ah* to reject from its midst?

The acceptable and praiseworthy types of collectivism are those which are conducive to the achievement of the *Jama'ah's* objectives by legally permissible means. If, however, joining hands with some particular groups would lead us away from these objectives and hamper our progression, leading to the severance of Allah's assistance and protection, then this type of collective work would not be acceptable.

Our *Shari'ah,* white instructing us to adhere to collective work and forbidding divisions, has also commanded that we should distance ourselves from certain people and prohibit ourselves from having them in our ranks. We must take the middle course in this regard, avoiding either extreme. We are not to join hands with all and sundry with no restriction or control. Neither must we refuse all types of co-operation and end up standing each in isolation from the other. Not all collectivism is legally acceptable, neither are all refusals to work jointly with others. It is up to us to distinguish between acceptable groups and the others, between praiseworthy co-operation and prohibited collusion.

By studying our *Shari'ah,* its injunctions and restrictions; the history of our *Ummah* and the experience of Islamic movements past and present; our own experience to date and our situation and surrounding reality; we come to the clear conclusion that there are three conditions that must be met in order that our co-operation is legally acceptable:

1. **Unity of purpose.**
2. **Unity of '*Aqeedah.***
3. **Unity of the understanding of the religion of Allah (SWT).**

Once these three conditions are fulfilled, differences in opinion or approach would cause no harm. Disagreement on all other issues apart from these three issues is acceptable and does not preclude unity and co-operation, but disagreement over them or over any of them is not permitted and does not allow unity and co-operation. There is no harm if we differ over some minor juristic matters; indeed, our meritorious predecessors have differed for centuries over a number of juristic issues. Some Muslim jurists differed over the legality of fighting during the holy months. Some permit the taking of *Jizyah* from the People of the Book and the Magians only, others permit taking it from all polytheists and disbelievers except for those living in the Arabian Peninsula. There are many other such examples of divergence in opinion on minor juristic issues, such as the distance which requires shortening *Salah* while travelling and reciting *al-basmalah* aloud in 'loud' *Salah.*

Any disagreement of the type *Ulama* call '*Ikhtilaf tanawwu'* (divergence of variety) is legally permissible even amongst members of the same *Jama'ah.* On the other hand, all without exception must follow the same line in matters related to the work and activities of the *Jama'ah* as long as it is regulated by the *Shari'ah* and takes the right course in these matters.

If the differences, however, are of the type known as *Ikhtilaf tadhad* (divergence of contradiction), the unity of those on either side of the disagreement is not permissible. The wrong party must be made aware of the right path, and when they do revert to it they are most welcome to join the fold. If they persist in their wrong then total rejection is the only acceptable stance to take against them. An example of this is the question of the permissibility of singing, music, temporary marriage *(zawaj al-mut'ah)* and other similar issues. It cannot be said in these cases, however, that some of our *Ulama* have permitted these activities. It is not acceptable to say that some *Ulama* in the past have judged these errors to be permissible and that we should not close the door of Ijtihad (reasoning) on them today. In fact, the *Ulama* who said this had practised Ijtihad but their efforts led them to the wrong conclusions. The right judgement on these matters is now clear to the *Ulama*, seekers of knowledge and lay people alike. It is not acceptable to follow a scholar's opinion which has become known as erroneous. Anyone who does this today must have the right judgement explained to him, and if he persists in his erroneous convictions he must not be welcome in the *Jama'ah.*

Now we return to the three conditions which any gathering whatsoever must meet: unity of purpose, unity of `*Aqeedah* and unity of the understanding of the religion of Allah (SWT).

We cannot accept into our ranks those whose ultimate goal is other than seeking of Allah's Pleasure. We reject all those who seek the pleasure of any other than Allah, those who strive hard in order to seek mere worldly gains or the praise of mortals, or the fulfilment of their own whims and desires.

It has been narrated that when the Prophet (ﷺ) invited the tribe of Bani 'Amir bin Saa'saa' to Islam, they sought to secure a promise from him that kingship of the Arabs should pass to their tribe after his demise. The Prophet (ﷺ) naturally refused this and turned away from them. He (ﷺ) did not accept among the ranks of the Muslims a people who had sought gain and pleasure in this life, rather than the eternal Pleasure of Allah.

It is our right and duty to reject from our midst all those whose ultimate goal is not the Pleasure of Allah (SWT). We reject all the nationalists and secularists; indeed, we must show enmity and hatred towards them. We also reject all those whose preoccupation and knowledge is solely related to worldly matters, those who take their whims and desires as their gods, those who persist in committing major sins openly. As for other Muslims who commit minor sins and acts of disobedience, each should be considered separately in accordance with the `criterion of evil and good' which decides whether it is good or not for the *Jama'ah* to include him as one of its members.

Neither do we accept in our ranks those who differ with us over fundamental issues of '*Aqeedah.* Both disbelievers and innovators (the followers of *bid'ah)* are not to be allowed in our ranks under any circumstances.

The Prophet (ﷺ) commanded Muslims to fight the innovating Khawaarij sect, even though they performed *Salah,* observed fasting and recited the Qur'an. The companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) fought the Khawaarij, killed them and were happy to do so; and `Abdullah bin `Umar distanced himself from those who refused to fight them. This matter has been settled once and for all. It is our right and duty to reject all the innovators who do not follow the teachings of our meritorious predecessors in all matters of '*Aqeedah.* We dismiss the Khawaarij, the Shiites, the Sufis, the Murji'ah sect and the Mushabbihah, the Mu'attilah, the Mutawaqqifah who refuse to judge those who profess Islam as either true believers or disbelievers. We also reject all those who have a deviant understanding of Islam. We do not join with those who innovate in religion or reject the teachings of our meritorious predecessors in matters of '*Aqeedah;* those who differ from us in our objectives, understanding of Islam, our *Walaa'* and *Baraa',* those who want to set out on the road using means other than those provided by Islam, such as working through political parties.

The Prophet (ﷺ) refused the pledge of allegiance from a man who had embraced Islam but refused to pay out *Zakah* or practise *Jihad* because of his stinginess and cowardice. He (ﷺ) rejected the man, saying, *"A religion with no Zakah or Jihad! With what are you going to enter Paradise?".* It is thus our right and duty to reject all those who turn their backs on *Zakah, Jihad, Da'wah* or *Hisbah.* And no-one has the right to reprimand us for doing so. No-one should cite the example of the tribe of Thaqeef who had stipulated their exemption from *Zakah* and *Jihad* as a precondition for embracing Islam. For although the Prophet (ﷺ) did accept their pledge of allegiance under these conditions, he said, *"They will pay Zakah and practise Jihad."* He (ﷺ) accepted them knowing, as Allah (SWT) inspired him, that they would pay *Zakah* and fight *Jihad* in due course.

We refuse to co-operate with those who differ with us in our '*Aqeedah,* ultimate goal, understanding, goal, path, provisions and attitudes of love and hatred towards those who deserve them. Any gathering or union which does not meet the correct conditions for holding such a gathering will definitely lead to intellectual unsteadiness and the loss of the truth in the midst all the falsehoods that surround us. This will consequently lead to a total paralysis, thus the incapability of scoring any progress in the field of Islamic activism.

Our fortresses are threatened from within because we have allowed contradictory and deviant creeds and ideologies to share them with us and they have undermined our very structure. Our fortresses are crowded and falling apart, unable to withstand the blows of the enemies, let alone prepare us for mounting an attack. Our advice to our fellow Muslims is that we must hasten to clear our fortresses from

those who have been causing this confusion. If they were to accept this advice, well and good. If not, then we have fulfilled our duty towards them by offering them this counsel.

As for us, we must learn not to join in with any other than the people of Truth, the people of complete and sincere Truth.

Commenting on the verse,

"And hold fast, all of you together, to the Rope of Allah (this Qur'an) and be not divided among yourselves." [Surah Ale-Imran (3), Ayah 103.]

Al-Qurtubee said, *"Allah (SWT) has made it obligatory for them (the Muslims) to hold unto His Book and refer to it whenever disagreement arises between them. He also commanded us to hold fast to the Qur'an and the Sunnah in both conviction and action, for this would be the cause for unity, harmony and benefit to the life in this world and the religion, in addition to the avoidance of discord."*

May Allah have mercy on our *Ulama. How* knowledgeable they were! Those who seek unity, harmony and avoidance of discord, those who aspire after success in this world and the maintenance of the religion must endeavour to achieve a unity based on holding fast to the Qur'an and the Sunnah, in both belief and action.

We must point out here that many of the sects and groups with which we are legally prohibited from unifying are acceptable partners with whom to co-operate and from whom to seek assistance for the benefit of this life and religion. There is a great difference between seeking unity and seeking assistance. The jurists *(fuqaha')* have sanctioned the employment of infidels to fight for Islam under certain conditions. Some of them also permitted fighting alongside the Khawaarij against the disbelievers. Yet we do not accept the disbelievers in our ranks nor the Khawaarij in our midst. The difference between seeking their assistance and unifying with them is clear and simple and must always be remembered.

Glossary of Arabic Terms

(Compiled by Mohammed Amin Kholwadia)

Allah - Ta'ala: Allah - The Most High:
The name of the Supreme Creator and Lord of the Worlds who exists by necessity and without any partners or offspring. The Arabic name Allah is not derived from any other source of meaning.

Ahlus-Sunnah wal-Jama'ah:
Muslims who follow the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the pious generations after him - as a community.

Alim:
A person with religious knowledge. A scholar.

Aqeedah:
Belief or faith based on how reality is rather than how it is imagined. Thus the Islamic Aqeedah can only be derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Ayah:
A verse of the Qur'an. It literally means a sign. (plural Ayaat)

Baraa':
Exonerating oneself from all that is displeasing to Allah.

Bid'ah:
Literally an innovation. Islamically, any innovative act that is carried out on the assumption that it has Islamic validity when in fact it does not.

Deen:
A way of life. Always, used to mean Islam and the way of life it offers.

Eid-ul-Fitr:
Literally Eid means happiness that returns. It is the day of celebration that immediately follows the end of Ramadan.

Eid-ul-Adha:
The Eid of sacrifice celebrated on the tenth of Dhul-Hijjah (the time of *Hajj).* There are three days of sacrifice for this Eid.

Faqih:
Literally someone who understands. Used for learned scholars who are discrete enough to give legal opinions. (Plural: Fuqaha)

Fiqh:
Literally, to understand. Used for the understanding of Islamic Jurisprudence.

Fisq:
To stray away from the right path (in actions). Thus used for sinners (Fasiq: plural Fasiqoon).

Hadeeth:
Literally something new (created as opposed to non-created like the Qur'an as the Speech of Allah) or an account. Islamically used for the actions, quotations, affirmations, confirmations, denials and refutations of the Prophet (ﷺ). Plural: Ahadeeth.

Hadeeth Qudsi:

Quotations of Allah revealed to the Prophet (ﷺ) but were not part of the Qur'an.

Hajj:

Literally means to intend. In Islam it means to make 'a firm intention to visit the Ka'bah, the House of Allah in Makkah and engage in specific rituals. Hajj is incumbent upon every Muslim who has the means to perform it with safe passage once during his lifetime.

Halal:

Lawful in Islam.

Haram:

Literally prohibited or sacred. Hence it is used for prohibited acts and substances and also for the inviolable places like the Masjid-ul-Haram (the Mosque around the Ka'bah).

Hasan:

Literally means good. Also used for a certain category of Hadeeth that has a reliable chain of narrators.

Hijrah:

Literally means to flee (stay away from). It means to emigrate for the sake of Allah. The Muslim calendar begins from the year of the Hijrah of the Prophet (ﷺ) from Makkah to Madinah (622 Christian Era).

Ihsaan:

Literally means to do good, or to excel. It is also used for one of the highest stations of Iman (faith) mentioned in the Hadeeth named after it (the Hadeeth of Ihsaan): to serve Allah as if one is seeing Him; and if one cannot see Him, then He definitely sees the servant.

Imam:

Literally someone who stands in front. Used for someone who leads the congregational prayers and also for eminent scholars. Also used to refer to the Khalifah: the leader of the Muslims.

Iman:

Literally to offer security. In Islam it is used to mean faith and belief in specific articles of faith that are enumerated in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Note that these articles of faith are to be believed in totality and not in any partial or piecemeal form.

Islam:

Literally means to submit and offer peace. Technically, it means to submit to the Will of Allah according to His Dictates and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Isnad:

The chain of narrators in a Hadeeth. The Isnad is the basis for classification of Hadeeth.

Jahiliyyah:

Literally the era of ignorance. Used to denote the pre-Islamic era where Prophetic knowledge was non-existent and acts of ignorance were rampant. Adjective: Jahili, meaning that which is related to Jahiliyyah.

Jihad:

Literally means to struggle and strive. Used to mean fighting in the Way of Allah for the establishment and defence of Islam and its teachings.

Jinn:

Literally means anything that is hidden. Hence, it shares the same root as the word Jannah (Paradise). Jinn refers to a species created by Allah from smokeless fire (hence invisible to the human eye) and who live alongside man in the universe.

Ka'bah:

Literally means anything that is protruded (like the ankle) or cubic in shape. It is used for the cube building in Makkah which is the focus of Muslims in their daily prayers. The Ka'bah was built by the Prophet Ibrahim.

Kafir:

Literally one who covers up, like a farmer (for which it is used in the Qur'an) who covers and hides seeds in the earth. It is also used for an ingrate: someone who does not appreciate. In Islam, Kafir (plural Kafiroon) is a non-believer or someone who does not believe in any or all articles of faith, i.e. the antonym of a Mu'min (believer).

Kalimah:

Literally a word. Used for the declaration of Allah's Oneness and the existence of His Supreme Attributes.

Khalifah:

The leader of the Muslims. The leader of the Khilafah.

Khilafah:

The Islamic State: a state which rules according to the Shari'ah in its entirety.

Kufr:

Literally means to cover or hide or show ingratitude. In Islam, it means to reject any or all articles of faith.

La ilaha illa'Allah:

The first Kalimah: `There is no deity except Allah'.

Makruh:

Literally means anything that is reprehensible. It is used for acts and things that are disapproved of by the *Shari'ah* without being forbidden.

Marfu':

A category of Hadeeth where the narrator attributes the text to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Muhammad ur Rasool'Allah:

The second part of the first Kalimah: Muhammad is His Messenger.

Muhsin:

Literally one who does good, or excels. It is used for those who bear the qualities of Ihsaan.

Mu'min:

One who has Iman (plural: Mu'minoon).

Munafiq:

A hypocrite. See Nifaq. (Plural: Munafiqoon.)

Mushrik:

One who commits *Shirk* (plural: Mushrikoon). See *Shirk.*

Muslim:

Literally one who submits. Used for someone who accepts and agrees to the tenants of Islam.

Nifaq:

Hypocrisy. To hide ones disbelief while showing belief.

Qadi:

A judge.

Qiblah:

Literally a focal point. It is used to mean the direction of prayer (the Ka'bah) from any point on earth.

Qur'an:

Literally means ‘a recital’. Technically, the Qur'an is the Word of Allah revealed in Arabic to Muhammad (ﷺ), the last Messenger, in a span of 23 years. The Qur'an is preserved both in text and context, forever. It is the final revelation until the Day of Judgement.

Rak'ah:

A unit of prayer.

Ramadan:

The ninth month in the Islamic calendar when Muslims fast during the day and observe prayers at night. The Qur'an was first revealed in this month.

Sahabi:

Literally a companion. It is used for someone who saw the Prophet (ﷺ) - or whom the Prophet (ﷺ) saw - in the state of Iman. (Plural Ashaab or Sahabah.)

Sahih:

Literally sound. Technically a Hadeeth whose chain of narrators are authentic in belief, character and memory.

Salaf:

Literally a predecessor. It is used for those pious predecessors from the scholars and leaders of the past who left their Islamic example for others to follow. Plural: Aslaaf).

Salah:

Literally means prayer. In Islam it refers to the five daily prayers Muslims perform at various times of the day. The five prayers are: Fair (after dawn, before sunrise); Zuhr (afternoon), Asr (late afternoon before sunset); Maghrib (at sunset) and `Isha (after dusk).

Sawm:

Fasting. A Muslim fasts from dawn to sunset; he refrains from food, drink and marital relationship.

Shahadah:

Literally the testimony. It is used to mean the specific testimony of a Muslim (usually a convert) with regards to Allah's Oneness and the apostleship.

Shari'ah:

Literally a path and a water hole. It is used to mean the legal system of Islam.

Shaytan:

Literally one who is far. It refers to Iblis (Satan) and to anyone who follows his path.

Shirk:

Literally to associate. In Islam, it is used to mean any association of partners with Allah, either in His Divinity or His Attributes.

Seerah:

Literally conduct. It refers to the study of the life of the Prophet (ﷺ).

Sunnah:

Literally a tradition or a practice. Technically, it refers to the body of traditions and practices of the Prophet (ﷺ) and the Sahabah which they performed or acknowledged as part and parcel of Islam. The Sunnah was then transmitted to the followers of the Sahabah and so on and so forth. The. Sunnah is much more restrictive than Hadeeth for a Hadeeth may contain acts or statements that do not necessarily conform with the general practice of Islamic practices.

Tafseer:

Literally to explain and elucidate. It refers to the specific science of explaining and commentating on the verses of the Qur'an.

Taqwa:

Literally to fear or to protect. In the Qur'an and elsewhere it means the effort to protect oneself from the Wrath of Allah and to fear and respect His Presence.

Tawaf:

Literally to circumbulate. It is used for the circling of the Ka'bah seven times (followed by two rak'at of prayer).

Taubah:

Repentance.

Tawheed:

The Oneness of Allah.

Ulama:

Plural of `Alim.

Ummah:

The total body of Muslims as a single community.

Walaa' :

Literally, loyalty. Used to mean total devotion to Allah and His Commands and to love and display loyalty for His Sake.

Zakah:

Literally to purify or to increase. In Islam, it refers to the specific amount of charity that is incumbent on those who possess a specific amount of wealth for a whole year.